



THE INDEPENDENT

No 3,833

SATURDAY 30 JANUARY 1999

(180p) 70p

IN THIS SECTION

**GRAEME LE SAUX:
THE MAKING OF A
TOUGH GUY**

SPORT, PAGE 30

IN THE WEEKEND REVIEW

**THE BEATTY MYTH:
ALL WE NEED
IS SEX**

FRONT

**FRAMED:
THE FINE ART
OF ROBBERY**

PAGE 9

Nato orders Kosovo peace deal

AS THE slaughter continues in Kosovo, Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, is to travel to Yugoslavia today to deliver what amounts to an order from the great powers to President Slobodan Milosevic and ethnic Albanian leaders to sit down together and wrap up a peace deal within three weeks.

Hours after 25 Albanians were killed by Yugoslav security forces in a dawn raid on a village south of the capital, Pristina, the six-nation Contact Group yesterday issued its plan to end a year of carnage. More than 2,000 people have died and

BY RUPERT CORNWELL

300,000 have lost their homes, threatening conflagration across the southern Balkans.

The proposals, giving a broad measure of autonomy for Kosovo, are expected to be reinforced by a specific final warning from Nato to Mr Milosevic that he faces air strikes unless he meets the demands for Yugoslav troops to pull back, and for war crimes prosecutors to be allowed to investigate the 13 January massacre at Racak.

The scheme announced by the foreign ministers of Britain,

the US, France, Germany, Italy and Russia is simple and stark - a measure of how the great powers have lost patience with a conflict that has stretched Nato's credibility as a peace-keeper, and threatens to create a humanitarian disaster if fighting resumes in the spring.

"We expect agreement in a week," Mr Cook stated flatly, a sentiment backed by Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State. "We have sent the parties an unmistakable message," she said. "Get serious, showing up is not enough."

But last night it was not

even clear they would show up, let alone agree a deal that satisfies neither side.

The initial reaction from both Belgrade and the insurgents of the Kosovo Liberation Army was frosty. The latter said they would not engage in talks until a ceasefire was in place, and then only about full independence.

The Yugoslav government insisted no ceasefire was possible in a war against "terrorists". Making no mention of the Contact Group proposal, it called for direct talks between the communities in the

province, 90 per cent of whose population is Albanian.

In a blunt statement after a two-hour meeting in London yesterday, the Contact Group said it was "summoning representatives of the Yugoslav and Serbian governments and of the Kosovo ethnic Albanians" to a conference starting by 6 February at Rambouillet, near Paris, to be co-chaired by Mr Cook and his French opposite number, Hubert Vedrine. Helped by mediators, they have a week to reach basic agreement, and a week thereafter to settle the details. If this ambitious timetable

holds, a deal will be in place by 20 February.

In fact, despite the lack of enthusiasm in both Pristina and Belgrade, Contact Group officials are reasonably confident both the Yugoslav, Serb side and the ethnic Albanian political leadership under Ibrahim Rugova will attend. The big problem is the KLA, bitter rivals of Dr Rugova and largely beyond the reach of allied threats.

"We can bomb the Serbs," one senior Nato diplomat said, "but how do we bomb the KLA?" Even so, he insisted, if the others went to Rambouillet,

the conference would go ahead, with or without the KLA.

As the American envoy Christopher Hill and his EU counterpart, Wolfgang Petritsch, continued their efforts to bring the ethnic Albanians together, Nato was finalising plans to deploy tens of thousands of Allied troops to police a peace deal.

Their task would be to maintain order within Kosovo and, almost certainly, seal the province's borders with Albania and Macedonia.

Germany yesterday joined Britain and France in promising ground troops, and the US

too is bracing itself for something it once vowed it never would do. The administration was "watching matters carefully" and would consult Congress before any decision, was all Mr Albright would say.

The ultimate quandary for the Allies, however, will be if the talks either do not start or if they end in failure. The official line is ground troops would never not be used in those circumstances.

But if the slaughter worsened, pressure on Nato to "do something" might become irresistible.

Troops stand by, page 13

Collins is borne past the graffiti of hate to his grave

A CHORD WAS struck with more than one person at the funeral of Eamon Collins yesterday when a young woman read from the Bible about a time to keep silent, a time to speak, a time to be born, a time to die.

The lines from Ecclesiastes helped to explain why the funeral was taking place: ex-IRA man Collins had, for his own complex reasons, decided simply to ignore the republican rule that a man in his position should keep silent.

Some 50 people, silent, downcast, some with red-rimmed eyes, followed his coffin from his home in Barcroft Park to St Catherine's church. Barcroft Park is a tough republican area of the town of Newry in Co Down, a tight-knit hilly estate, few gathered to watch the funeral procession, and those who did looked on impassively.

The splashes of colour on yesterday's grey day came

BY DAVID MCKITTRICK
Ireland Correspondent

mostly from the plentiful republican paraphernalia. As the mourners shuffled down the hill they passed the graffiti that had threatened Eamon Collins, and predicted his death.

He used to go out with a paintbrush and paint over the slogans or alter them: he changed one which labelled him "RUC Tout" to "RUC out". But he could not wipe out the hatred of those who regarded him as a traitor to the republican cause, or those who carried a personal grudge against him. Thus it was that the body inside the coffin was not just dead but mutilated, stabbed and battered in an attack which, as one police officer graphically put it, could have been carried out by primitive cavemen.

The sad little procession, which seemed to be



The grieving family of murdered Eamon Collins (from left), his son Lorcan, daughter Sorcha, wife Bernie, daughter Aoife and son Tiarnach

Justin Kernaghan

family, walked past a tricolour, past a poster glorifying an IRA man with a machine-gun, and past an elaborate granite monument erected in memory of locals "who were part of Ireland's struggle for freedom".

Further down, they walked slowly past small knots of people who, wiser and more discreet than Eamon Collins, plainly knew the value of silence.

They said little or nothing,

even to each other, giving the impression that they were simply observing rather than being in the business of paying their respects to the dead.

But there was a surprisingly large representation inside the church, perhaps 200 people listening to Father Peter McParland chide politicians who did not wish to know Eamon Collins when he was alive but who now "use his death to suit themselves".

Father McParland produced no extravagant anathema against the killers, contenting himself with remarking in general terms that they had all seen too much of war, hatred and injustice, and expressing the hope that this pointless killing would be the last.

Then, in a local graveyard, they buried Collins, the man who helped the IRA to kill so many people, who recanted, who refused to obey the re-

publican rules, and who paid the price with his life. His tortured death is only the latest in the toll of more than 3,600 victims of the troubles.

There, at the graveside, was a wreath from his four children - "In loving memory of Daddy from Lorcan, Aoife, Sorcha and Tiarnach" - a stark and sad reminder that he was also somebody's father, somebody's husband, and somebody's son.

Woodward drama at end as Eappens settle

THE LONG-AWAITED civil trial in the Louise Woodward murder case was averted at the eleventh hour last night after the former au pair and the parents of Matthew Eappen, the toddler who died almost exactly two years ago while in her care, reached a surprise out-of-court settlement.

The deal, which should mean the final lowering of the curtain on the legal drama that propelled the Woodward name on to front pages worldwide, was unveiled in Boston by lawyers for Sunil and Deborah Eappen. It aims to bar Ms Woodward from profiting from her notoriety by selling her story.

The civil trial, which would have been held with a jury but

BY DAVID USBORNE
in New York

without the attendance of Woodward, was to have got under way in Boston in the next few days. The Eappens were seeking compensatory and punitive damages for the death of their son, which could have run to millions of dollars.

Woodward, 20, was originally convicted of second degree murder in her criminal trial in October 1997. In a surprise twist, however, the trial judge shortly afterwards reduced the conviction to one of manslaughter and freed her on the 279th day she had already served.

Matthew Eappen, who was just 8 months old, died on 9 February 1997 five days after being

taken to hospital with head trauma. The Eappens filed their wrongful death lawsuit in June last year, one day after the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court upheld the manslaughter conviction and allowed Woodward to return to Britain. Raised in Elton, Cheshire, she is now studying law at a university in London.

A lawyer for the Eappens, Frederic Ellis, said the settlement would ensure that Woodward "does not profit from the killing of their 8-month-old baby". There was no information on whether any money will change hands between Woodward and the Eappens.

In a statement, the lawyer said that "enforcement action" would be taken in the event that

Woodward violates the agreement and that any profits she makes would be seized and donated to the Mattie Eappen Foundation, a charity established by the Eappens.

Mr Ellis said he was confident that any breach of the agreement could be challenged through the British courts. "It's a contract and with any contract there's always a chance it won't be honoured," he said. "If she doesn't honour it, we will bring another action and that action would have to be in England".

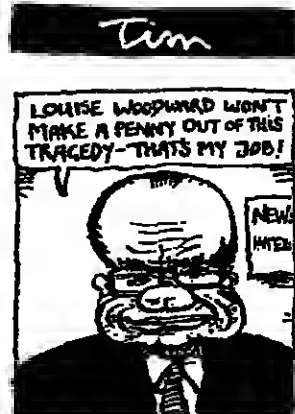
Paul Barrow, the lawyer for Woodward, left open the possibility that his client could still tell her story. He said, however, that any proceeds would be given to the charity of her

choice, which would be Unicef. "Louise has always maintained that she has no intention to profit from her story, and Louise continued to maintain her innocence," he said last night.

The Daily Mail drew criticism when it paid for an interview with Woodward's parents, Susan and Gary, conducted between the two verdicts in the criminal trial. The sum was reported to be £40,000. Last December, the Press Complaints Commission cleared the newspaper of wrongdoing.

Last night Mr Woodward said his daughter's ordeal would always affect the family. "It will never leave us."

"We can try, we've been through - and everybody in-



involved in this have been through - an awful lot," he said. "It will never leave us but we've got to try and move on."

INSIDE THIS SECTION

Rape reform setback
Move by the Lord Chief Justice could defeat reform of rape trials
Home P2

'Virtual auctions' row
Sotheby's Internet plans have angered rivals
Home P5

Impeachment trial
Monica Lewinsky will give evidence on video in Bill Clinton's trial
Foreign P13

Witch-hunt in Pakistan
An old, mad woman was burnt alive by villagers
Foreign P14

Mobile phone deal
BT is given DTI go-ahead to take full control of Celtel
Business P17

Sri Lanka crushed
England's one-day cricketers triumphant
Sport P32

INSIDE THE REVIEW

Natasha Walter
Can Warren Beatty at 60 still believe his own propaganda for sex?
Review Front

Fergal Keane
Yemen: I fear I've been complacent about race
Comment P3

Art at gunpoint
Museums and collectors are vulnerable to raids by gun-toting gangs
Features P9

Wet, wet, wet
Anna Pavord finds a solution to waterlogging
Garden P17



TODAY'S TELEVISION
PAGE 32

THE INDEPENDENT ABROAD	
Australia	6.00 AM
Belgium	40.00 AM
Canada	3.00 PM
Cyprus	1.00 PM
France	11.00 PM
Germany	10.00 PM
Greece	10.00 PM
India	12.00 AM
Italy	12.00 AM
Japan	12.00 AM
South Africa	12.00 AM
Spain	12.00 AM
Sweden	12.00 AM
Switzerland	12.00 AM
Turkey	12.00 AM
USA	12.00 AM

For more information or a free assessment please give us a call
01737 552980

... and trust us, we know about damp

IN TOMORROW'S INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY



'Deliberately killing people in front of their families; torturing and mutilating victims before shooting them ... for such a task, you need people who enjoy their work.'

Fintan O'Toole on the IRA

THE BEST-WRITTEN SUNDAY PAPER IN BRITAIN, FEATURING DAVID THOMSON, JEREMY CLARKE, WALLACE ARNOLD, PETER YORK, CRISTINA O'DONE
JOAN SMITH, GILBERT ADAIR, MICHAEL BYWATER, DEAR ANNIE, CAPTAIN MOONLIGHT, FELIPE FERNANDEZ-ARRESTO AND ALAN WATKINS

Lords set to defeat rape evidence Bill

GOVERNMENT MOVES to ban rape defendants from cross-examining their accusers are facing defeat in the House of Lords next week following an extraordinary intervention by the country's most senior sitting judge.

The Lord Chief Justice, Lord Bingham of Cornhill, yesterday laid down an amendment to the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Bill that would allow rape victims to be questioned by defendants. This would occur only if judges deemed it necessary for a fair trial.

A further amendment challenges the Bill's ban on barristers raising a woman's sexual history in a rape case, another element about which Lord Bingham is known to have "serious misgivings".

The Home Secretary, Jack Straw, has frequently promised better protection for rape victims in court, and is understood to want to defend the Bill in its entirety.

The measures followed two high-profile rape trials in which the defendants represented themselves and humiliated their victims in open court.

Both Ralston Edwards and Milton Brown were convicted, but women's groups and Labour MPs were appalled that judges had not intervened in their respective trials.

Yet Lord Bingham points out that since the two cases, the Court of Appeal has issued very strict guidelines to prevent the incidents happening again. No similar cases have since occurred, he asserts.

His amendment will insist that the ban on cross examination will not be enacted

BY PAUL WAUGH
Political Correspondent

unless there is evidence that the guidelines are failing.

Similarly, the second amendment will allow judges the discretion to allow questions about the rape victim's sexual history to be raised only if it is seen as crucial to the interests of a fair trial.



Lord Bingham: Know to have 'serious misgivings'

The Bill faces its first key test on Monday when the amendments are heard in the Committee Stage in the Lords, and the Government is likely to face substantial opposition from the Lords' "barrister's lobby".

Lord Bingham and his supporters hope that the amendments will force the Home Secretary to "think again" about the measures, but if there is no change, he faces a major

Lords revolt. Tory peers are understood to be prepared to back the amendments if the Government refuses to back down.

Baroness Mallett, who laid down the amendments together with Lord Bingham, said that they aimed to restore to the judiciary the discretion to make rulings in rape cases.

Baroness Mallett, a practising QC, said that the Government was legislating in response to public perception of a problem that rarely occurred in reality.

"What the Bill proposes is unnecessary because there have only been two cases where there has been a problem. It is a really drastic step to deprive somebody in all circumstances of the right to cross examine someone. Just occasionally, it helps to get at the truth.

"Similarly, I've never seen a case where a judge has allowed unnecessary questioning of an accused's sexual history. The rules are already very strict.

"I get Women Against Rape and other people phoning me up, but of course we are all against rape. It's just that we don't want to make the law so harsh that juries start acquitting because they think the defendant hasn't had a fair trial."

A spokeswoman for the Home Office pointed out that the Bill was going through the early stages of its passage through Parliament.

"The Government will listen to all the comments made, but the Bill as currently drafted reflects Government policy," she said.



Three-year-old Elle Walsh dialled 999 when her mother, Liz, 28, got locked in a cupboard with her brother Harry, 20 months, as a game of hide and seek went wrong at their home in Yotts of Muckhart, central Scotland. Elle directed police to the home and they freed the pair

Three latest Britons arrested in Yemen 'have confessed'

THREE Britons arrested by Yemeni security forces this week in connection with alleged terrorist offences have confessed, it was reported last night.

The three, who surrendered to police on Thursday after being surrounded for two days in mountains in eastern Yemen, were captured with three other men: a French national of Algerian origin, an Algerian and a Yemeni. They will join five

BY GARY FINN

other Britons and an Algerian for trial today in the southern port of Aden, after security sources said they had also admitted to charges of associating with armed groups, forming a plan to commit murder and destruction, and possessing weapons.

Last night, campaigners for the British prisoners - all Muslims from Birmingham,

Luton and London - called the confessions "worthless" and said they had been elicited through torture.

Claims of torture emerged on Wednesday when the five Britons - Malik Nasser, 28, Samad Ahmed, 21, Shahid Butt, 33, Gulam Hussain, 26, from Luton, Malik Nasser, 26, and one Algerian man arrested on 24 December - appeared in court looking distressed and

showing bruises and cuts. Amid scenes of near-chaos, they claimed they had been sexually abused and electrocuted with cattle-prods. They have now withdrawn their confessions.

So far the Yemenis have denied access to doctors wishing to check the men's condition.

Mohammed Latif, a barrister, and Dr Christopher Milroy, a home office pathologist and torture specialist, were due to fly out to Yemen today to see the men, together with Mr Ahmed's father.

The Yemenis were last night reported to be blocking any further visa requests to foreign nationals. This is being interpreted as an attempt to stop the Britons' families gathering support in Yemen.

Relatives of the accused already in Yemen yesterday wrote to the Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, asking him to intervene. In their letter they repeated claims of torture.

"The trial as presently setup represents a flagrant breach of

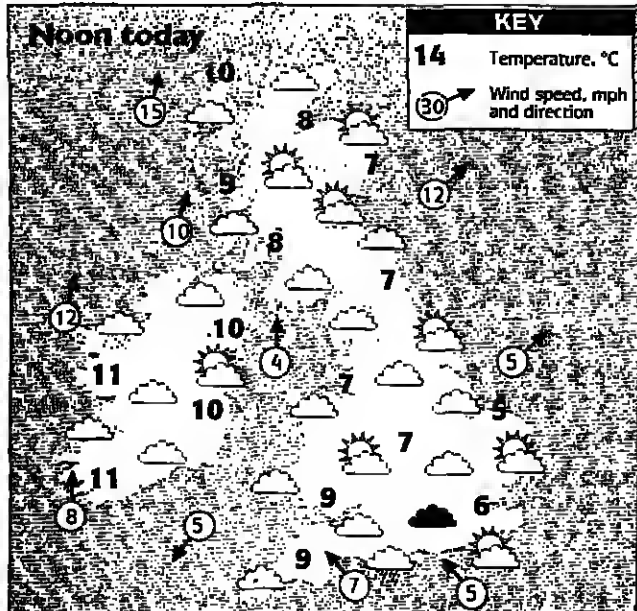
the Yemeni constitution, the code of criminal procedure and international law," they said. "In their anxiety to have a swift trial the Yemeni authorities are organising a kangaroo court, where the defendants have no chance to answer or refute the prosecution allegations."

The Foreign Office refused to comment on the letter, as it was "private correspondence", but said the torture allegations were being taken seriously. "We have asked for an explanation and investigation at the highest levels," a spokesman said.

The Yemeni President, Ali Abdullah Saleh, yesterday claimed the Britons were paid \$2,000 by the London-based Muslim cleric Abu Hamza al-Misri to carry out the attacks in Yemen with promises of a further \$10,000. He repeated calls for Hamza's extradition to Yemen, a move that faces some difficulty as Britain and Yemen have no extradition treaty.

Fergal Keane, Review, page 3

BRITAIN TODAY



FORECAST
General situation: A misty start with fog patches lingering well into the morning in central areas. Even when they clear much of the country will stay cloudy, and drizzle is likely across western and northern Scotland and parts of the north-west land, mainly towards northern coasts. Drizzle could affect southern England for a while, too, but most places will be dry. The best of any sunshine will be over south-east England and eastern Scotland but those spots will be rather cold.

Wales, England, N. & S.: Any fog patches lifting. Cloudy for a while but dry, with some sunshine breaking through. A gentle south to south-east breeze. Max temp 5-6C (41-46F).

Wales, Midlands, E. England, N.W. England, Lake Dist, Isle of Man: A misty start with fog patches slowly lifting. Staying mostly cloudy and dry. A light, variable breeze. Max temp 7-9C (45-48F).

Wales, N. & E. England: Fog patches slowly lifting. Staying mostly cloudy but generally dry with a chance of some late brightness. A light south-west breeze. Max temp 7-9C (45-48F).

SW & NW Scotland, Glasgow, N. Isles: Mild but cloudy with some drizzle here and there. A moderate south to south-west breeze. Max temp 7-10C (45-50F).

SE & NE Scotland, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, N. Isles: Cloudy or misty at first but clearing with some sunshine appearing later. A light to moderate southerly breeze. Max temp 6-8C (43-48F).

N. Ireland: Cloudy or misty at first but clearing with some sunshine appearing later. A light to moderate southerly breeze. Max temp 6-8C (43-48F).

OUTLOOK

It will stay dry and settled across much of the country with light winds. Away from the south-east it will be rather cloudy with mist and fog patches early in the morning. South-east England will be colder but have there is a greater chance of some sunshine.

TRAVEL

London: A12 Green Man Roundabout, Leytonstone. Major roadworks on new M11 link road. Until 31st December.
Cambridge: A10 between Foston and M11. Resurfacing and bridge maintenance work at Shipston Mill. Until 14th February.
Bristol: M5 J16-18. Major roadworks on Avonmouth Bridge. Until 23rd June 2001.
Lancashire: M6 between J27 Standish and J28 Leyland. Roadworks: contrail and a 50mph speed limit either side of Charnock Richard Services. Until 15th February.
Greater Manchester: A57, M666 near Manchester-bound, due to M666 construction work. Until 28th February.
AA Roadworks: Call 0396 401777 for the latest local and national traffic news. Source: The Automobile Association. Calls charged at 30p per min (inc VAT).

LIGHTING UP

	4.57pm	to	8.15am
Belfast	4.57pm	to	7.51am
Birmingham	4.56pm	to	7.51am
Bristol	4.56pm	to	7.51am
Glasgow	4.56pm	to	7.51am
London	4.56pm	to	7.51am
Manchester	4.56pm	to	7.51am
Newcastle	4.56pm	to	7.51am

HIGH TIDES

	AM	PM	PM	HT
Avonmouth	5.58	12.5	6.30	12.8
Cardiff	4.19	12.5	4.44	4.2
Doverport	4.38	5.2	5.09	5.1
Dover	9.52	6.3	10.21	6.5
Donaghadee	10.32	4.2	10.54	4.2
Galway	4.26	5.0	4.40	4.9
Greenock	11.18	3.4	-	-
Harwich	10.42	3.8	11.09	3.8
Holyhead	8.12	5.5	9.42	5.5
Hull (Albert Dock)	5.06	8.3	5.31	8.4
Kings Lynn	5.06	6.1	5.26	6.3
Lisbon	1.13	5.3	1.39	5.4
Liverpool	10.08	9.1	10.35	9.2
Millford Haven	5.05	6.6	5.31	6.6
Newquay	3.58	6.6	4.23	6.7
Portland	5.24	1.9	6.04	1.9
Portsmouth	10.12	4.6	10.40	4.6
Purcell	2.02	4.6	2.27	4.7
Scarborough	2.50	5.2	2.12	5.6
Wick	10.14	3.5	10.43	3.5

AIR QUALITY

	NO ₂	SO ₂
London	Moderate	Good
S. England	Moderate	Good
Wales	Moderate	Good
C. England	Moderate	Good
N. England	Moderate	Good
Scotland	Moderate	Good
N. Ireland	Good	Good

SUN & MOON

Sun rises:	02.43
Sun sets:	16.46
Moon rises:	15.40
Moon sets:	05.40
Full moon:	Jan 31st

WEATHERLINE



YESTERDAY

	Winnipeg	Yamouli	Yamouli
Winnipeg	11C (52F)	-	-
Yamouli	11C (52F)	-	-
Yamouli	11C (52F)	-	-

EXTREMES

	Winnipeg	Yamouli	Yamouli
Winnipeg	11C (52F)	-	-
Yamouli	11C (52F)	-	-
Yamouli	11C (52F)	-	-

THE WORLD

	Winnipeg	Yamouli	Yamouli
Winnipeg	11C (52F)	-	-
Yamouli	11C (52F)	-	-
Yamouli	11C (52F)	-	-

THE WORLD YESTERDAY

	Winnipeg	Yamouli	Yamouli
Winnipeg	11C (52F)	-	-
Yamouli	11C (52F)	-	-
Yamouli	11C (52F)	-	-

COME RAIN OR SHINE...

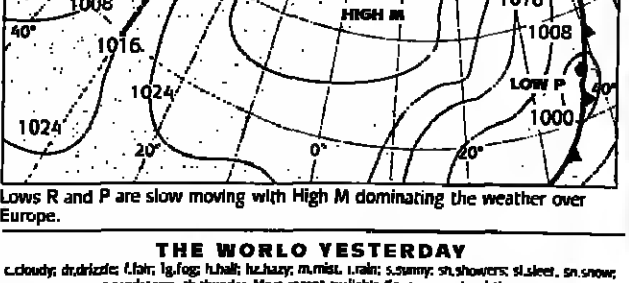
RAIN-STARVED regions of Cambodia were drenched with showers for the first time in years yesterday but officials warned it may not be enough to head off a major drought.

Cambodia's dry season usually begins in late November and lasts until May. But this year there have been occasional showers in December and January. Agriculture officials say the upcoming dry-season rice harvest will be badly hit by the water shortage.

THE WORLD



THE ATLANTIC NOON TODAY



THE WORLD YESTERDAY

	Winnipeg	Yamouli	Yamouli
Winnipeg	11C (52F)	-	-
Yamouli	11C (52F)	-	-
Yamouli	11C (52F)	-	-

THE WORLD YESTERDAY

	Winnipeg	Yamouli	Yamouli
Winnipeg	11C (52F)	-	-
Yamouli	11C (52F)	-	-
Yamouli	11C (52F)	-	-

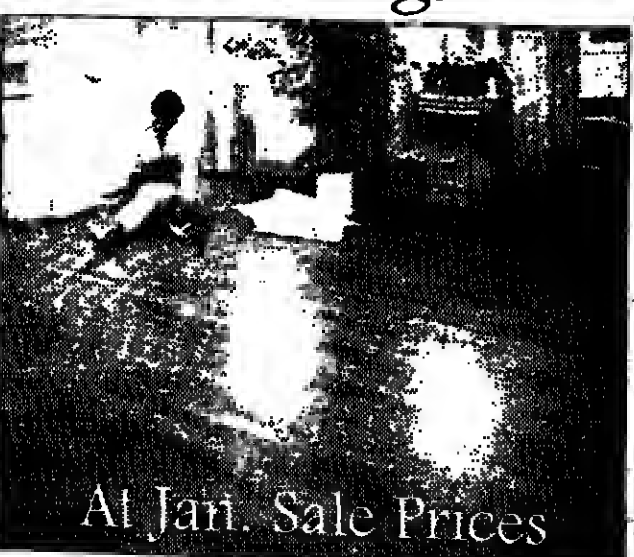
THE WORLD YESTERDAY

	Winnipeg	Yamouli	Yamouli
Winnipeg	11C (52F)	-	-
Yamouli	11C (52F)	-	-
Yamouli	11C (52F)	-	-

THE WORLD YESTERDAY

	Winnipeg	Yamouli	Yamouli
Winnipeg	11C (52F)	-	-
Yamouli	11C (52F)	-	-
Yamouli	11C (52F)	-	-

Beautiful hardwood flooring.



At Jan. Sale Prices

Transform your home with a beautiful natural hardwood floor that will stay attractive for years.

- Suitable for all floors
- Easy to clean
- Wide choice of timbers
- Prefinished and sealed
- 10 year manufacturer's guarantee
- Fitted exclusively by Timberland craftsmen

Timberland Flooring Company Ltd

JANUARY SALE IN FULL SWING. PRICES DOWN BY UP TO 20%. CALL FOR A FREE BROCHURE.

FREEPHONE 0800 980 2468

Can you recognise these top Tories?



(50 per cent of party chairmen can't)

THEY THINK the shadow Home Secretary is "that chap we call Spock" and that their education spokesman is a clever man with glasses. One of them has not even heard Labour is in power. No wonder William Hague has decided to censor "party activists."

Many of the 50 local Conservative chairmen questioned in an *Independent* survey this week were right behind their leader, though some were not 100 per cent sure who he was. "I don't follow what happens in the Conservative Party and would prefer to make no comment on the whole matter," said one respondent. "Why should I be expected to know who the shadow cabinet are?"

He and his fellow chairmen were doing little to hoist morale after news broke that Central Office was planning to take the blue pencil to its private polling to soften critical comment. Party officials are worried that few members know who's who in the shadow cabinet.

"Tim Yeo's job is having sex in the gutter, isn't it?" said another respondent. "Is he in

BY FRAN ABRAMS
Westminster Correspondent

charge of the environment?" Mr Yeo is his party's agriculture spokesman.

Mr Hague's choice of key aides did have plenty of backing, though. "The Prime Minister has to pick his own team," one activist explained.

When asked how a leader in opposition should act, he replied: "Well, I don't know. You will have to ask Jumpin' Jack Cunningham."

There was also some optimism about the future. "I am a fan of people like Michael Howard and Gillian Shepherd."

They are young and have a good part to play," one chairman opined. Mrs Shepherd is 59 and Mr Howard is 57.

More than three-fifths of the 50 chairmen questioned knew that Peter Lilley was deputy leader and that Francis Maude was shadow Chancellor, but even those two were not familiar to all.

Asked what Mr Maude did, one chairman responded: "Goodness knows!"

Another could not remember who the deputy leader was. "I can't remember his name. He has blond hair - quite nice but shy and retiring," he said. "But it should be Ann Widdecombe."

Three party chairmen thought Gillian Shepherd still spoke on education - a job she gave up at the general election, first becoming shadow Leader of the House and then spokesman on the environment, transport and the regions.

One thought the job was now held by Virginia Bottomley, the former Health Secretary.

Poor Peter Ainsworth, Chris Smith's shadow at the culture department, was placed in the correct job by just 12 of the 50 chairmen.

"Atkinson, something like that. Pass," guessed one. Another said: "I'm not at all sure. It's not important, in my opinion."

Asked to name the Conservative Party's home affairs spokesman - Sir Norman Fowler - just 18 managed to do that.

Four thought the job was held by Michael Howard, who speaks on foreign affairs.

John Redwood did much better than most, but with several eager chairmen placing him at home affairs instead of trade and industry. One de-

scribed him admiringly as "the Enoch Powell of our age".

Mr Yeo's high recognition factor seemed to have more to do with a past extra-marital affair than his job, and only 18 chairmen correctly named his current job.

One placed him at education, adding: "He's a good chap. I like him."

William Hague was popular with most of his party chairmen, and one said a local dinner at which he spoke was sold out almost instantly. Nearly all agreed he was fighting an uphill battle against a popular government and an unenthusiastic press.

"I am mystified as to why we're not leaping up the polls. I frankly think the world has given up on politics," one respondent said.

Another thought Mr Hague should emulate the Prime Minister. "Mr Blair walks across water every day, but he only says what he is going to do and not what he has done. We should maybe learn from that," he said.

Others were not so sure that would work, though, and seemed to fear their every move would prove unpopular.

"Mr Hague cannot fire his guns too soon otherwise policies get shot down too soon before the general election," one explained.

Some wanted Mr Hague to ditch older members of the shadow cabinet for younger MPs, but others were not sure even that would work.

"He has got to introduce new blood, but the trouble is we don't have much young blood to choose from," said David Jackson, vice-chairman of the Boothferry party and one of the few who would be named.

Mr Ainsworth could not be contacted yesterday but the chairman of his Surrey East constituency party said a 30 per cent recognition rate among party officers was not at all bad considering he had been appointed only last summer.

"His profile has been rising gently as you would expect. It does take time, and not many people watch parliamentary Question Time," he said. A party spokesman said the Conservatives had difficulty getting their spokesmen on the media, but that was now improving.

A widely held view that the Tories would gain popularity as Labour's failings were exposed was correct, he added.

"The newcomers are making an impact. That may not have got to Chipping Sodbury yet but it is a start," he said.

Interviews by Cathy Mayer, Dominic Fyfield, Meera Selvanathan, Lisa Baxter and Tom Kelly

HOW DID YOU FARE?

1. Sir Norman Fowler (Home Affairs): Some mistook him for Michael Howard. "Is it that dark chap who was Foreign Secretary?"

2. Peter Ainsworth (Culture): "I can see his face but can't remember his name. He's quite slim. Isn't he?"

3. David Willetts (Education): "I don't know his name but I think he has glasses."

4. Tim Yeo (Agriculture): "Who? I never see him on telly."

British intelligence foils plot to bomb Iraq rebels

BRITISH INTELLIGENCE

officers have foiled a bomb plot against the US-backed Radio Free Iraq in Prague, according to Czech media reports.

The bomb plot has also been linked to the sudden firing of the head of the Czech counter-intelligence agency (BIS), Karel Kufner, late Wednesday night. It has been alleged that the Czech agency had failed to uncover the planned terrorist actions.

Czech television has claimed that the former Iraqi consul to Prague, Jaber Salim, had been instructed to blow up the offices of Radio Free Iraq in Prague's Wenceslas Square. Salim then informed British intelligence.

BY PAUL LASHMAR

The radio station is a key opponent of the regime of President Saddam Hussein and is based in Iraq. It is considered a thorn in the side of the Iraqi government.

There have also been reports that Salim was an Iraqi spy-master who has defected and is currently being debriefed in an MI6 safe house in the Home Counties.

Salim, 43, head of Iraqi intelligence operations in eastern Europe, disappeared late last year.

He is reported to have told colleagues at the Iraqi embassy in Prague that his daughter

needed urgent treatment in Austria. Salim was said to have been an "agent-in-place", passing British intelligence on Iraqi arms purchases from former Eastern Bloc countries.

The Czech government announced on Thursday that it had fired Kufner, citing "serious professional failure". It has refused to give details and security surrounds the decision. Mr Kufner was brought in to reorganise the agency in 1997 after it was heavily criticised. However, criticism has continued.

The agency has been blamed for a number of failures that have embarrassed the Czech government. Most notably, it failed to warn the government of the sale last year of nine top Czech hotels to Cornithia Group, a Maltese company which the US considers to be Libyan-owned. As a result, the US bans Americans from staying in these key hotels.

The Czech daily newspaper *Mlada Fronta Dnes* reported that Kufner was fired for failing to recruit Salim. The Foreign Office yesterday refused to confirm that British intelligence had foiled the bomb plot.

"We do not comment on intelligence matters," said a Foreign Office spokesman yesterday.

Mowlam: My alcoholic father



Ms Mowlam: Revealed her troubled childhood

MS MOWLAM revealed last night that her father was an alcoholic and doing her school work helped her to deal with the tensions of her home life.

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland has rarely spoken of her childhood other than to say her family life was "dysfunctional", but in an interview with Michael Parkinson, on BBC1, she revealed how it had affected her.

"I have not talked about it that much because even though ... I don't have any trouble with it, I don't think my family and my mum should be subjected to it," she said.

BY KATE WATSON-SMITH

But she said that when her mother learnt she would be on the show, she said it was fine for her daughter to discuss it.

"It was difficult to bring people home because you weren't sure if he would be drunk or sober," she said. "I used to go to my bedroom and do my homework because it got me out of the washing up and having to deal with the problem."

Ms Mowlam grew up in Coventry where her late father, Frank, was a postal worker. Her mother, Tina, was a telephonist and Labour activist who

helped shape her daughter's political views.

She said she wanted to talk about her upbringing in more detail "when I have more time."

"I think it is important for kids growing up in alcoholic families to see if I can do this and get through it, then so can they." Parkinson also asked what it had been like to talk to murderers during the negotiations for the Northern Ireland peace process. "It is not easy and the emotions you feel are very mixed and particularly after having met some of these people, then to meet the families of the victims," said Ms Mowlam.

The BT shop
communication experts

Sale
Must End
This Weekend



Audioline FF555 cordless phone

Was £39.99

Sale Price £29.99

Save £10

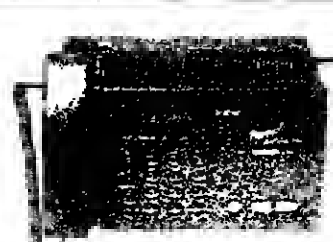


BT EasyReach 8381 alphanumeric pager

Was £69.99

Sale Price £49.99

Save £20 FREE CD



Brother 510 fax machine

Was £159.99

Sale Price £129.99

Save £30



BT Freestyle 320 Plus cordless phone with LCD screen

Was £79.99

Sale Price £69.99

Save £10



Binatone Eurotel 1500 digital cordless phone with caller display

Was £89.99

Sale Price £79.99

Save £10



Special Purchase Limited Stock: Colinet Advance 2000 mobile phone

Was £99.99

Sale Price £79.99

Save £20

Look out for more great sale offers instore

Save on communication For your nearest store call Freephone 0800 400 004

The BT shop
communication experts

BT

Lawrence detective is moved off case

THE DETECTIVE heading the dormant investigation into the murder of the black teenager Stephen Lawrence has been moved because of a corruption inquiry and replaced by John Grieve, head of the Metropolitan Police's specialist race crime unit.

Scotland Yard said yesterday that Detective Superintendent Albert Patrick had been taken off the Lawrence case as a result of the unrelated inquiry into officers based at the Flying Squad in east London.

The family's solicitor, Imran Khan, had demanded Mr Patrick's removal in a letter to the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Sir Paul Condon, last week.

News of Mr Khan's move emerged on the same day *The Independent* revealed that both he and Michael Mansfield QC, barrister for the Lawrences, face criticism in the report of the public inquiry into Stephen's death for their failure to dissuade the family from mounting the ill-fated private prosecution of the murder suspects.

Yesterday both lawyers refused to comment on the disclosure.

There is no suggestion that Mr Patrick is directly implicated in the allegations of corruption, but he faces a disciplinary investigation understood to relate to the supervision of officers in his charge.

Mr Grieve, the highly respected head of the Met's racial and violent crime taskforce, is now the detective in charge of all the high-profile race murder investigations in London.

He is leading the hunt for the killers of Michael Menson, the black musician who was set on fire in a London street, as well as the investigation into the

BY KATHY MARKS

case of Ricky Reel, an Asian student found drowned in the Thames.

John Stevens, Deputy Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, yesterday defended the timing of the announcement of Mr Patrick's removal.

The decision had been taken in December, he said, before Mr Khan's letter was received.

"We decided that now would be an appropriate, sensitive and sensible time to make that move," he said.

The corruption allegations date from an era before Mr Patrick headed the Lawrence investigation, and are not connected with the Lawrence case.

Mr Stevens stressed that Mr Patrick had not been charged, disciplined or suspended. His new job is to carry out a review of major area crime units.

Mr Patrick was in charge of the third squad of detectives to investigate Stephen's murder by a white gang in April 1993. No one has been convicted.

Mr Grieve hopes to follow up new lines of inquiry. But he will also ask members of the public to volunteer fresh information about the killing.

Peter Gammon, chairman of the Police Superintendents' Association, attacked what he called "the continued vilification of the police service" over the Lawrence case.

Mr Gammon told an association conference in Chester that the clear-up rate in murders was "about the same" for black and white victims.

"Accusations of racism are still being levelled at officers involved and at the police service as a whole," he said.

"We feel the accusations are unfounded and without substance."



Some of Simpson's last customers doffing their hats to the demise of a British institution

Peter Macdiarmid

Purveyor of suiting to Mr Bertie Wooster finally shuts up shop

THE SMILING face of the doorman as he greeted some of Simpson's last customers belied the discontent inside the store. Two assistants were having an indiscreet moan about the way bargain-hunters were rummaging through the last of the stock. It was all rather undignified towards the end.

At 3pm today, the doors of Simpson, in central London, will close for the last time. The shop is something of an institution, part of the world-renowned parade on Piccadilly, alongside Fortnum & Mason, Hatchard's booksellers since 1797 and the Royal Academy of Arts. Tatty red awning

BY CLARE GARNER

bedecked the entrance, and the words "Good buy, Good buy" were sprayed on the building's famous curved windows. Long-standing customers had come to say just that yesterday. One, Margaret Simpson - a well-spoken woman, immaculately turned out in one of the store's navy hacking jackets - was particularly sad to do so.

As it turned out, she was no relation of the original Simeon Simpson, who established Simpson's Daks line of clothing in 1894. Over the years, however, she had enjoyed deferential treatment from staff who

assumed she was. "I wish I had been a 'Simpson' Simpson," she said. "It wouldn't have closed if I had been."

Sozos Liassides, who has worked in the men's suits department on the third floor since 1971, was trying to maintain standards to the last. The 63-year-old Cypriot, known to colleagues as "Andy" (anything else was too complicated), retired in September but agreed to stay on until the closure.

"I'm a qualified tailor," he said. "I did alterations of my own free will to satisfy the customers, because they pay my wages, not the company."

"If I wasn't satisfied with

what came from the workroom, I did it myself because then it was perfect. Many times I ripped garments to pieces and put them together again."

Mr Liassides stood beside the lonely rails of remaining suits. His own clothes hung beautifully, but then again, he had made them himself. Perhaps he could have made it into management if he'd played his cards differently, but he didn't care for politicking, he said. He cared for the clothes and the customers, a quality that probably contributed in no small part to Simpson's reputation.

"I don't know," Mr Liassides murmured mournfully. "It's a

pity because you can't find many people like us anymore. Great Britain used to be number one in the world for making garments. Now I don't know what's happened. Most of the stuff is imported. Why don't they train young people?"

The barber in the basement was rather jaded by the sentimentality surrounding the store's closure.

"It seems to be a very drawn-out end and I think we've got to the point now when we are glad to clear off. People are very upset that the place is closing. But you ask them if they shop here and they say 'No'."

Sarwar 'offered to pay fines'

BY NICK MEO

A MAN said to be Labour MP Mohammed Sarwar told an associate that he would pay any fine imposed on the man, according to a tape recording played to a jury yesterday.

The associate, said to be Badar Islam, repeatedly asked the other man if he could be jailed for lying in a statement. But the man said to be Mr Sarwar told him he would not expose "his brother" to any risk and would pay any fine, "even £100,000".

A recording of fragmentary conversations, in both English and Punjabi, were played at the High Court in Edinburgh by advocate Duncan Menzies QC. A translator assisted the jury.

Mr Menzies said the tapes related to the second of the four charges Mr Sarwar faces, that alleges he attempted to pervert the course of justice by inducing Mr Islam to swear a false statement in return for a payment of £5,000 soon after the May 1997 general election.

Mr Sarwar, 46, of Glencairn Gardens, Pollokshields, Glasgow, denies this and the three other charges - of fraud relating to the addition of four names on the electoral register, a second charge of attempting to pervert the course of justice, and an allegation of understating electoral expenses.

The businessman became Britain's first Muslim MP when he was elected for Glasgow Govan in 1997.

A co-accused, Mumtaz Hussain, 41, from Lesmahagow, Lanarkshire, denies one charge of attempting to pervert the course of justice.

On the tape played yesterday, reference is made to false registration of voters. At one point the man alleged to be Sarwar says: "One thing worth mentioning to you, the fake registrations... Labour was also doing these. The SNP was also doing these." The man said to be Sarwar is also heard speaking of how his enemies wanted to "destroy" him. There is mention made in the tape of the word "bombshell".

The trial resumes on Monday.

If you can't
see the wood
for the trees...

...Step back
and look at the
facts!

Waste paper represents over 46.03% of the raw material used to make UK newspapers, the wood comes from managed forests.

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE USE OF RAW MATERIALS
IN THE NEWSPAPER INDUSTRY:

DIAL THE
FAX BACK NUMBER
0660 616231
0660 calls cost 49p per
minute at all times



OR WRITE TO:
1 RIVENHALL ROAD,
WESTLEA,
SWINDON, SN5 7BD
TELEPHONE: 01793 879229
FAX: 01793 886182

Issued by the NEWSPRINT & NEWSPAPER INDUSTRY ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION GROUP

Labour vetting panel has 'bias to stop Livingstone'

LABOUR OFFICIALS were accused of trying to "kneecap" Ken Livingstone's campaign for mayor of London yesterday when it emerged that the party's vetting panel had been packed with his opponents.

The former GLC leader's supporters reacted angrily after it was revealed that the panel formed to draw up a shortlist of candidates was heavily skewed against him.

In the most serious setback to date for Mr Livingstone's bid to become Britain's first directly-elected mayor, *The Independent* has learned that the 12-strong panel is dominated by staunch Millbank loyalists.

The membership of the body emerged as a new controversy erupted over the Brent East MP's comments that government cuts were "whacking" the poor in the capital. Writing in the *London Evening Standard*, Mr Livingstone claimed that the most vulnerable had been hit hardest by a recent round of council cuts in London.

The comments contrasted with an earlier open letter to

BY PAUL WAUGH
Political Correspondent

Tony Blair in which the MP said that he would not use the mayorality to wage political warfare against the Government.

According to a confidential Labour document approved by the party's national executive committee, the vetting panel for all Greater London Authority candidates will comprise four NEC members, four London party members and four "independent" members.

The NEC figures are the Parliamentary Labour Party chairman, Clive Soley, with two loyal officials from the MSF and AEEU unions.

The Greater London Labour Party members are dominated by the "stop Ken" camp, as is the independent group. Worse still for Mr Livingstone, the document states that the "disciplinary and voting record" of all candidates will be scrutinised.

The detailed selection procedures for the mayorality are to be decided over the next two months, but it is understood



Ken Livingstone: Setback for mayoral campaign

that the panel will be used for both GLA assembly and the mayoral contests.

Geoff Martin, London convener of Unison and a former member of the London Labour Party Board, said the moves proved that Millbank officials were determined to block Mr Livingstone. "It is just so transparent now that this is an attempt to kneecap Ken and the ordinary Labour voters and members will see it as such."

Choosing a sanitised list of panel members is another attempt to erect barriers to his candidacy. The people who should really have a say are the ordinary members.

But Jim Fitzpatrick, MP for Poplar and Canning Town and chairman of the London Labour Party, said Mr Livingstone's conflicting statements proved he was trying to "dupe" party members. "It seems Ken has changed his mind about being loyal to the Labour Party before the ink is dry on his letter to Tony Blair," he said.

"If Ken cannot keep his word for a mere 24 hours, how can anyone believe he would stick to his promises over a four-year mayoral term?"

Joan Ryan, MP for Enfield North and a member of the London Party Board, said the selection panel was representative of the ordinary party members in the capital.

"Ken's views and those of his supporters are marginal within the Labour Party, so there is no reason why they should be on a selection panel," she said.

Dome deal set to tame 'Mail'

THE PUBLISHER of the *Daily Mail* and *London Evening Standard* is set to be handed the contract to produce a newspaper for the Millennium Dome, in a deal that could help the Government to overcome opposition to the £758 million project.

Associated Newspapers is believed to have beaten off bids from the Express and Mirror groups. The decision to tie up the deal will be taken next month by the government-appointed task force that advises the Dome's New Millennium Experience Commission (NMEC) on marketing.

The deal will allow Associated to produce a four-page

BY PAUL MCCANN
AND PAUL LASHMAR

supplement containing 'Dome News', which could be wrapped around a copy of one of its own newspapers. It could also be linked into the group's plans to produce a new free newspaper for London, called *Metro*.

The Dome is forecast to attract 35,000 visitors a day - 12 million during the year it is open. The bidders believe they should be able to distribute up to 2m newspapers in the Dome, allowing one title to get into the hands of hundreds of thousands of potential new readers.

For the Government, bringing Associated on board is a

chance to get one of the Dome's fiercest critics on to the side of the Dome. The *Daily Mail* has christened the Dome the 'Millennium Monster', and has planned daily articles comparing the hospitals and schools that could have been built with the cost of building the Dome. If the title is printing a special supplement, it will be forced to support the project.

The *Sun* has already switched its opinions on the Dome after its sister company, the satellite channel BSkyB, paid £12m to sponsor an auditorium being built next to the Dome. For its £12m, Sky gets the right to broadcast live events from the Dome and use

the auditorium to stage its own concerts. From being opposed to the money being spent, *The Sun* is now a supporter.

Matthew Freud, the public relations executive who sits on the NMEC's advisory committee, is known to have recommended Associated for the contract particularly to end criticism from the *Evening Standard*. While the *Mail* has been vitriolic in its opposition to the project, the *Standard* has focused on the inconvenience for Londoners caused by traffic problems.

Associated said it was still awaiting a decision from the NMEC, and denied reports that it had bid £500,000.

Coronation finery and Charles I's silver treasure lie in estuary mud

BY STEPHEN GOODWIN
Scotland Correspondent

KING CHARLES I thought it an act of the Devil when he watched the royal ferry *Blessing of Burntisland* capsize in the Firth of Forth, taking priceless Stuart treasure and members of his entourage to a watery grave.

Nineteen witches were rounded up in Lancashire for invoking the squall that swamped the vessel in 1633 and a distraught Charles cut short his coronation tour of Scotland and retired to London. The witches died in jail. And Charles, a staunch believer in the divine right of kings, lost his head on the block in Whitehall - 350 years ago today.

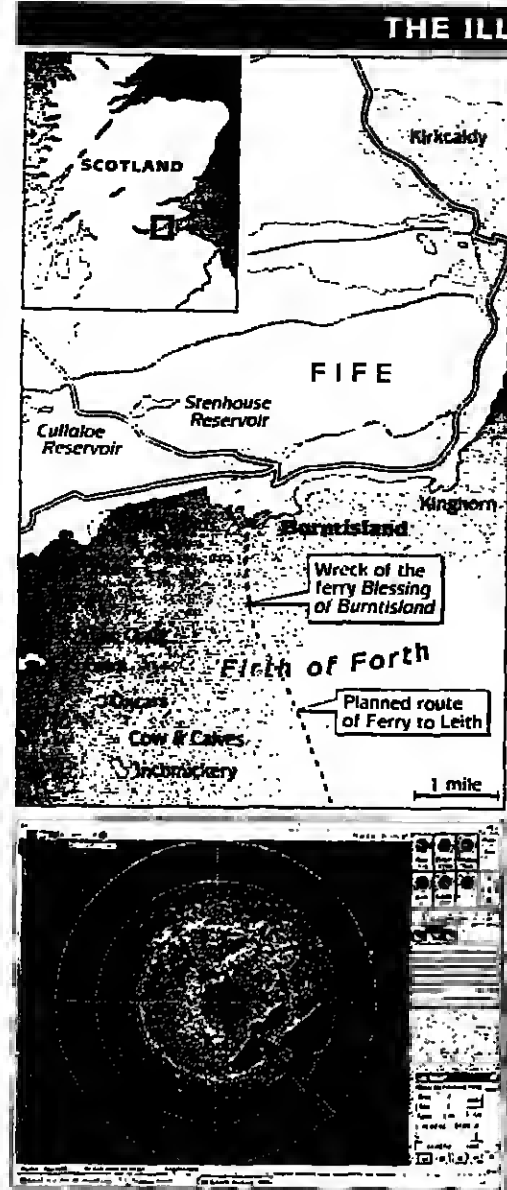
Now the waters of the Forth may be about to yield up the wooden hull of the *Blessing* as well as tons of royal possessions - perhaps worth £500m in today's values.

Marine archaeologists yesterday detailed the discovery of a wreck very similar in profile to the ill-fated ferry, buried in several feet of silt. Howard Murray, the leader of the project, said the wreck had a "better than even chance of being the *Blessing*". But though a diver has touched the heavily encrusted timber no artefacts will be brought to the surface until the wreck has been fully surveyed and conservation facilities are in place. "I have no intention of being known as the person who destroyed Charles I's treasure," Mr Murray said.

The wreck lies a mile off Burntisland on the north bank of the Forth, at the same spot indicated in 1987 by Jim Longton, 67, a "dowsner", who used a map of pendulum in a technique similar to water divining.

Members of the Burntisland Heritage Trust and the Royal Navy have been searching for the *Blessing* since 1991. But until Mr Longton's divination hopes were dwindling.

Then last September sonar equipment on board HMS *Rock* located the wreck site. The computer-produced survey images were encouraging



Top: Locator map describing the route and whereabouts of the *Blessing* of Burntisland. Above: Sonar image showing the wreckage of the ferry. (Arrow shows location of ship). Right: Artist's impression of the ill-fated vessel. Far right: King Charles I.



the down to Holyrood Palace for the coronation. From there he went on to Linlithgow Palace and Stirling Castle. He revisited his birth place at Dunfermline and as an entertainment for his courtiers had a pontoon built over water on which 50 Highlanders danced a fling.

The last stop before the ferry crossing was the royal hunting lodge at Falkland Palace. His 3,000-strong entourage included 150 English nobles and 350 soldiers. And as they approached the Forth, 1,000 horses were needed to pull 200 carts loaded with gifts and royal baggage. The treasure was said to be worth £100,000 - one fifth of the entire Scottish exchequer. Not surprisingly, the likely cause of the *Blessing*'s sinking was not the witches but simple overloading.

A contemporary account records that on a "somewhat tempestuous day some Englishmen, the King's servants and rich coifers were drowned in sight of the King's pinnace, [boat] which made the King melancholy that night".

To the great relief of the project team, Donald Dewar, the Secretary of State for Scotland, slapped a Protection of Wrecks order on the site yesterday to keep treasure hunters away. "We are not treasure hunters, but the knowledge that they might move in on the site has been one of our biggest worries," Mr Kilgour said.

He dreams of finding the ferry cabin boy's pipe in the wreck with Charles' books and Bibles, not just the fabled 280-piece silver dining service of King Henry VIII.

A full recovery and conservation operation could cost £5m or £6m - way beyond the trust's means. The team are hoping for Lottery money. And if the ferry is raised, they want it to remain close to the old port of Burntisland.

The story of the coronation tour and loss of the *Blessing* is told in a book launched yesterday by Mr Murray. Sales will help to fund further work. Copies at £9.75p can be ordered via Freephone 0800 833 957 or Internet site www.kingcharles-wreck.co.uk

nel has gstone

Antique dealers hammer Sotheby's online auction

PLANS BY Sotheby's to steal a march on rivals with the first major auctions in Britain through the Internet have angered art and antique dealers.

Leading dealers have been approached by the auction house and offered incentives to supply art, antiques and jewellery for the revolutionary sales.

The British art and antique dealers were made an offer on commission if they agreed to work only with Sotheby's for the next two or three years. They have to sign within seven days.

The British Antique Dealers' Association has now written to its members, warning them to be cautious of the offer as other opportunities should arise as "actual auctions" take off in the 90s.

Sotheby's New York office is

BY LOUISE JURY

spearheading the company's global move into Internet auctions.

The announcement last week immediately boosted the business's share price and follows the success of other online auctioneers such as eBay in the States. Diana Brooks, president of Sotheby's Holdings, said: "It is clear that the Internet is superbly suited for holding auctions."

Some critics claim that if Sotheby's succeeds, they would have a virtual monopoly before rivals Christie's follow suit later in the year.

One antique dealer said yesterday that the Sotheby's deal was "outrageous and very uncompetitive. There aren't enough of these goods for nor-

mal auctions and virtual auctions as well so they need to get the dealers on board. If they do, they know Christie's won't have a chance when they start."

As goods will not be examined by the auctioneers in the way they would be in a normal auction, it is understood that Sotheby's will rely on dealers with good reputations supplying items for sale. Most dealers sell on some old stock through auction houses.

Elaine Dean, of the British Antique Dealers' Association, said the proposition was an "interesting" one that they had to take seriously.

But she said: "We are urging our members to be cautious before they sign up for something for three years. We do feel that seven days isn't very long to sign quite an extensive con-

tract. We're saying be careful."

An art trade insider said the Sotheby's offer seemed to have outraged many of the dealers. "They feel they are being pushed around. I don't think it has gone down too well."

David Redden, an executive vice-president of Sotheby's, said it was investing more than £15m in the service and needed to ensure it had enough property to sell. The dealers he had spoken to were very excited by their offer.

Christopher Davidge, chief executive officer at Christie's, said details of their plans would be revealed on 1 March. But he said: "Christie's will not be proposing any arrangements that restrict competition in the marketplace, as we believe this runs counter to the philosophy of the Internet."

Police chief goes after 999 riddle

Charge football stars, says judge

ONE OF the country's most senior police chiefs has retired days after officers from his force went to his home in response to a "999" call, it emerged yesterday.

Earlier this week Robert Turnbull, 51, the Deputy Chief Constable of Cleveland, announced he was stepping down five years before his £72,000-per-year contract was due to end. He was involved in conducting one of the country's largest police corruption inquiries.

Mr Turnbull's surprise decision to retire was announced soon after an incident on 20 January when Cleveland police officers visited his home in response to an emergency call.

The call is believed to have been made by Mr Turnbull's wife, Margaret, from the couple's home on the Wynyard estate near Stockton, Teesside. It is understood the person who

BY JASON BENNETTO
Crime Correspondent

rang "999" replaced the telephone receiver before identifying themselves, but police were able to trace the call.

Cleveland police confirmed yesterday that "police attended a house in Wynyard park, Billingham, on January 20". Officers spoke to one person at the house. No one was charged and no complaints were lodged.

Mr Turnbull, who has been a police officer for more than 32 years, was entitled to retire, although he has asked to leave in March rather than work out the usual three months' notice.

A special meeting of the Cleveland Police Authority has been called to discuss the case. Mr Turnbull said in a statement that he had taken the decision after discussions with his wife and two adult children.

A JUDGE said yesterday that professional footballers should be prosecuted for assaulting opponents and brought to court to set an example.

Judge Richard Benson made the comments after hearing the case at Nottingham Crown Court of a 49-year-old amateur footballer who head-butted an opposing player during a match.

Judge Benson said: "I am unable to recall in this country a single footballer in the Premier League or lower who has been prosecuted for this. Sometimes the Scots get it right. Duncan Ferguson, who assaulted a player, was sent away for six months and quite right too. If something like that did happen, it would surely filter down through our game."

The judge earlier mentioned a number of other cases: "Paolo di Canio pushed over a referee.

That is common assault in anyone's book. Why on earth he was not brought up on these charges I do not know.

"And there was the match between Arsenal and Southampton where the TV camera caught a Southampton player having his jaw broken. The offending player ended up being banned from the game for nine matches. The report and TV evidence would have been enough to have had a high-profile player made an example of in the courts."

Donald Annahle, 49, of Headland Avenue, Elkesley, Nottinghamshire, admitted causing actual bodily harm to Malcolm Duncan while playing for Clumber Inn against Epworth over 30s on 29 August last year.

He was given two years' probation and ordered to pay his victim £300 compensation.



TICKET HOTLINE

0870 8401111

TICKETS £12

SATURDAY 6TH FEBRUARY

LONDON MENS FASHION WEEK

Sponsored by **HONDA**

LIVE

FEATURING: PAUL SMITH, VIVIENNE WESTWOOD, JOHN HICHMOND, PATRICK COX, PAUL COSTELLO, LIMEHAUS, D.A. LILLARD

The unknown gems in our urban midst

NEXT TO the farmyard barn, the nonconformist chapel is the most threatened building type in England. This information comes from the Historic Churches Trust, which was founded six years ago to preserve the best of them, and now looks after 11 chapels scattered from Northumberland to Devon (there are separate bodies for Wales and Scotland).

Nonconformism has never been as fashionable as Anglicanism, nor so well-funded, and for doctrinal reasons its places of worship tend to be plain: "preaching-boxes" is the term often applied. But it was certainly popular and bewilderingly diverse. England has as many non-Anglican as Anglican churches - about 17,000 of them - but who can now tell the difference between Methodists and Independent Methodists, Baptists and Congregationalists, Unitarians and United Reformed?

All over England, in cities, on moorland, in old factory towns, their separate heaps of brick and stone stand as evidence of once-passionate debate and schism and clique, as well as to self-improvement and belief in God. Sometimes they have been converted to Indian restaurants, nightclubs, flats, second-hand furniture warehouses. Sometimes they stand open to the rain and wind. A surprising number, given the state of British Christianity, still draw clusters of people on a Sunday to listen to sermons and sing hymns.

In North London, I live quite close to a chapel. The Union Chapel (Congregationalist) stands at the northern end of Upper Street in Islington. Upper Street is very familiar to me. Over almost 30 years I have watched it change from a working-class high street to one of the chief parade grounds of London's young well-to-do, lined with bars, restaurants, estate agents and

NOTEBOOK



IAN JACK

in the Almeida, the most fashionable theatre in London. But of the Union Chapel, which after the town hall may well be the street's largest building, I knew nothing.

I noticed its clock. I noticed that it was a Victorian building set in the middle of a Georgian terrace. I wondered who, if anyone, went there and if anyone had ever answered the usual poster invitations to come inside and get to know Christ a little better. I was mildly surprised that it had not been demolished.

On Wednesday, my ignorance was corrected when the Union Chapel's minister, the Rev Janet Wootton, was good enough to show me the inside. Nothing had prepared me (I should have read Pevsner) for the sheer size and spectacle of it. The Union Chapel has polished oak pews that once held 3,000 people, galleries, stained glass, decorative tiles, marble, a great organ originally powered by water (which went on its course to flush the church lavatories).

According to Pevsner (later consulted) the style is 13th-century French Gothic, with a central plan inspired by the church of Santa Fosca in Torcello, on the Venetian lagoon. But that is just the chapel itself. At the rear of the main building lies a jumble of corridors and handsome halls built for Sunday School tuition and enlightened public meetings.

Congregationalism must have seemed a mighty and unquenchable movement when the chapel was opened in 1877. And now? Christian churchgoers account for 2 per cent of London's population. Mrs Wootton preaches to a congregation of 30.

She took me up into the pulpit, which she never now uses (too authoritarian to be modern), and explained the theological reasoning behind the church's design. The pews arranged on three sides had no hierarchy - every worshipper could see and hear equally well. How the windows had no sills - and therefore no room for graven images. How the organ was screened - so as not to tempt the faithful into the worship of musical instruments.

She pointed to the ceiling, more than a hundred feet up, and said that behind the cupola lay an Archimedes screw, a great propeller to expel the foul air that would gather from a 2,000-strong congregation. Today, the problem is not ventilation but heat.

The Union Chapel was nearly demolished in 1980. Its survival owes a lot to the faith of Mrs Wootton and her congregation, but also to secular influence. The chapel is now listed by English Heritage as Grade II*, and the signage inside it is not always biblical instruction. As well as Sure and Steadfast, there is also No smoking and This way to the bar.

Thanks to an associated charity, The Union Chapel Project, all kinds of non-Christian events happen here. Rock concerts, readings, theatre rehearsals, Scarsus Heaney, Eddie Izzard, Simon Rattle. The egalitarian beliefs of Congregationalism have given it perfect acoustics. Last year Rattle said after his concert: "I'm kicking myself that I've not been performing there for years." And, oddly for teetotal nonconformism, the church



The mighty Union Chapel in Islington, north London, opened in 1877 when Congregationalism seemed unquenchable

Tom Craig

deeds do not proscribe the sale of alcohol. Mrs Wootton has done the research.

A great deal of money still needs to be raised, about £3m for repairs to the fabric alone. The new plan is to make it "a theatre for the human voice" and focus on lectures, debates and choral concerts. Nonconformism is rich in the traditions of dissent and hymns (perhaps its greatest, and wrongly ignored, contribution to British culture). The Union Chapel would be a glorious and appropriate place to hear both.

Out in the traffic of Upper Street again, I felt the slight sadness of the non-believer. The Union Chapel does good work; its halls take in and feed the homeless, children with learning difficulties attend classes there. A shame, then, that one cannot share the spiritual motive of it, believe the story.

In a street and a world consumed by market forces - "renovated family semi-det

house with 100ft gdn, en-suite bathroom to the master bed, £595,000" - the Union Chapel is a refreshing and necessary thing. It was good, at last, to have discovered it.

LATE LAST year I wrote in this column about the wartime documentary films of Humphrey Jennings; about their brilliance as propaganda (because they were so reticently patriotic) and about the poetic lessons they could teach any contemporary British politician who was struggling to evoke a new British identity.

William Hague obviously did not read this, but then he is a busy little leader. His speech last week on Britishness, by which he may have meant Englishness, was the most terrifying encounter with folkiness since I last heard the late broadcaster Wilfred Pickles. You could see what the Tory leader was trying to do. Out with John Major's

Fifties nostalgia and Baroness Thatcher's Churchilliana: in with something bang up to date. Consequently, we got the British as a "brassy" people who liked soap operas and a good laugh, and also (naturally) nourished a sense of fair play. It is not entirely inaccurate, but it would also fit Brazil or indeed any entrepreneurial nation with more than one television channel.

Also, it might double the emigration figures. Heard the Chancellor, Gordon Brown (to whom Tony Blair seems to have dashed out the "British question" job in the Cabinet), will have to try harder if they are to persevere as national inspirers. Here is some advice, which came in a letter to me this month from Mary-Lou Jennings, the director's daughter.

She writes: "I was interested in your last point: the present need for some cunning, concrete poetry (if ideas of Britishness are to be revived). My father's work in film was,

I believe, a mission based on his belief in the duty of a poet. In 1938 he did a series of broadcasts on poetry and the public, and in the one on poetry and national life he quoted Apollinaire whom, he said, believed that poets should stand with their backs to the future and face the past because it was in the past that he could discover who he was and how he had come to be him".

"My father added, 'That idea of extracting an idea of what I am from the past is a thing that a poet does for himself, and especially it is a thing that he can do for the community; I mean, he can try and tell them who they are... [and talk about] the figures, the monuments, the achievements, the defeats, or whatever it may be that have made the community what it is.' That was what his films, like *Listen to Britain*, were about."

Politicians are not poets, of course, and you could argue

that the past for too long has been a crippling national disease. But politicians who have tried to abolish it - Pol Pot, Stalin - failed among their many other sins to understand human and civic need.

Finally, a note on Jennings. He was probably the finest, most inventive documentary film-maker Britain has produced. He died young, aged 42, who he fell from a rock while he was filming in Greece. His daughter writes that she is beginning to think him "almost forgotten except among film buffs". She also says that he has no memorial of any kind. Even his grave in Athens has been destroyed.

Next year will be the fiftieth anniversary of his death. He deserves to be remembered in some permanent form - a plaque, a bust, an award, a scholarship. I would be happy to pass on letters to Mary-Lou Jennings with suggestions about where and how.

IN BRIEF

Man accused of 14 sex charges

SIDNEY COOKE appeared before magistrates in Newbury, Berks, yesterday, charged with 14 serious sexual offences involving eight alleged victims. Mr Cooke, 71, said to be of no fixed address, had been arrested on Tuesday at Yeovil, Somerset.

'Chunnel cheat' claims innocence

AMAN has denied using Eurostar trips to cheat two councils out of housing benefit when he was in fact living in Belgium. Jean-Paul Ngolo Mpati Moka, 33, told the Old Bailey he only travelled to Belgium to preach. He denies gaining a total of £4,653 from Haringey and Hounslow councils by deception.

Extra cash keeps RSC on the road

ROYAL SHAKESPEARE Company and Welsh National Opera tours have been rescued by an emergency package of one-off Arts Council grants. Opera North, the Royal Court Theatre and the Contemporary Dance Trust have also benefited from the £1.46 million fund.

Porsches recalled for airbag faults

PORSCHE is recalling more than 5,000 vehicles, including 400 in the UK, because of an airbag problem. The recall of M-registration 911 sports cars, follows the discovery of an electrical fault that can cause airbags to activate at random.

JACK STRAW: PROFILE



'Priggish' is a tribute paid by the old and dim to the precocious

IN THE WEEKEND REVIEW PAGE 5

Do not demonise Islam, says Carey

BY CLARE GARNER

THE ARCHBISHOP of Canterbury urged Christians and Muslims yesterday to avoid "demonising" one another and instead to focus on working for the common good.

Dr George Carey, who is on an eight-day visit to the Middle East, became the first Archbishop of Canterbury to address the 15,000 worshippers before Friday prayers at Abu Nour Mosque, the largest mosque in Damascus.

He began with the words: "Salaam aleikum! Peace be with you all" before going on to say: "Sadly, when we look at the history of the world all too often we find it littered with the remains of conflicts between Christians and Muslims. This has led to a culture of distrust and to the tendency for each of us to demonise the other."

Such "demonising" ignored the great contribution both faiths can make to the world, he added. "The influence of our faiths, the strength of our worship, the enduring force of our

traditions and the commitment to family life and the lives of our communities gives us a duty and a remarkable opportunity to make a significant contribution to the human family and its future," he said.

Dr Carey warned against "aggressive proselytism". Both Christianity and Islam were missionary religions, a fact that could not be disguised nor denied, he said. "But, despite all the inherent risks in this recognition, there is no reason why it should lead us towards conflict. Rather, it should instil in us a sense of respect, a respect for such enthusiasm and devotion of faith," Dr Carey said.

He hoped his presence at the mosque before Friday prayers "will be seen by Muslims everywhere as my commitment to a dialogue based on friendship, integrity and honesty - and above all respect between the members of both our faiths".

NOTICE TO C&G BORROWERS

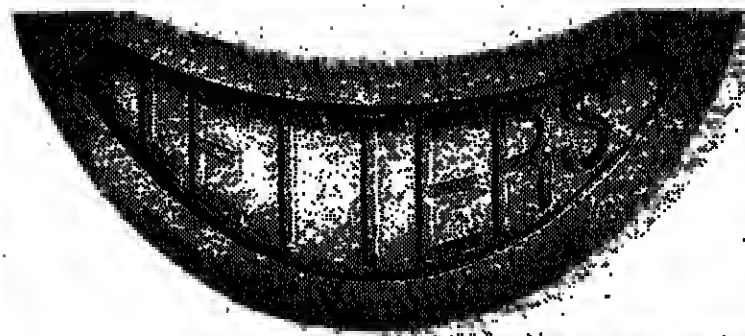
- C&G's variable mortgage interest rates are to reduce by 0.25% per annum.
- The reduction takes effect on 1 February 1999 for loans where no notice period for rate changes is required.
- For loans where a notice period is required, borrowers have already been sent individual notification.
- For loans in our annual instalment review scheme, the change will be reflected in payments from March 2000.
- For loans with a capped interest rate where this rate change takes C&G's standard variable below the capped rate, our standard variable mortgage rate will apply until further notice.
- This notice does not apply to new variable rate loans which started on or after 12 January 1999 as they are already on the new rate. In addition, this notice does not apply to borrowers whose mortgage rate is currently fixed, or who have capped-rate mortgages where the capped rate is lower than the new variable rate.



Cheltenham & Gloucester plc, Barnett Way, Gloucester GL4 3RL

Announcing our latest premium postal rate

UP TO
6.15%
GROSS AER



If you're looking for a high interest postal account, look no further than Alliance & Leicester's 60 Direct.

It is a 60 day notice account that gives you interest of up to 6.15% gross AER on balances of £100,000 and over.

On top of that, you'll also receive an interest premium of 0.5% gross p.a. on all balances for the first twelve months. (The rate shown above includes the interest premium.)

So, for a high rate of interest, you don't need to go from pillar to post. Just call Alliance & Leicester today on 0845 60 888 60 and ask for a free information pack.

**Alliance
Leicester**

Common sense in a crazy world

Call now for your free information pack

0845 60 888 60

Quote code
PPO7

Lines are open Monday to Friday 8am - 8pm and Saturday 9am - 5pm, or visit our website at <http://www.alliance-leicester.co.uk>

*The rate shown is only available on balances of £100,000 or more. £50,000 - 6.10%, £25,000 - 6.05%, £10,000 - 5.90%, £5,000 - 5.75%. Rates shown are Gross p.a./Gross AER and include the interest premium, correct as at 26th January 1999 and are variable. All rates include a 0.5% gross p.a. variable interest premium, payable for the first 12 months. Minimum investment for this account is £5,000. Maximum investment per individual is £250,000. The minimum deposit of withdrawal for 60 Direct is £250. Please ensure that you read this in conjunction with the account terms and conditions. The rates do not take into account deduction of Income Tax. Interest will be payable net of Income Tax at the rate determined by the Inland Revenue, from time to time, or, subject to the required registration with HM Revenue & Customs, the Inland Revenue where the amount deducted exceeds your liability to tax. Similarly, if you are liable to higher rate tax, additional Income Tax may be payable to the Inland Revenue. All rates are subject to change without notice. Rate and interest rates are subject to change without notice. For security and training purposes telephone calls between you and Alliance & Leicester plc or its subsidiaries may be recorded/monitored. Alliance & Leicester plc, Registered Office: 49 Park Lane, London W1Y 4EG. Company No. 3263713. Registered in England. Authorised by a bank pursuant to the Banking Act 1987. Member of the British Bankers Association.

Personal loan rates.

NOW FROM ONLY **9.9%** APR.

Call Direct Line.

- You'll have fixed, low monthly payments.
- No compulsory insurance, arrangement fee or complicated paper work.
- No security or deposit required.
- Call now for an instant decision on loans from £1,000 to £25,000.



0181 680 9966 0161 831 9966 0141 248 9966
LONDON MANCHESTER GLASGOW

CALL ANYTIME 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 5pm Saturday.
www.directline.com/loans Please quote ref. NIND52

Direct Line Financial Services Limited, 250 St. Vincent Street, Glasgow, G2 5SA. You must be aged 21 or over and have a regular income (evidence is required). Subject to status. Rate correct as at 21st January 1999. Available in England, Scotland and Wales. Written questions on request. Calls recorded and monitored. Direct Line and the red phone icon are the trademarks of Direct Line Insurance plc, used with its permission.

VASONIC

BEST PRICE THE SPOT

ILL NEVER BE BEATEN

Gan keel Indi busi

the profession in the Green Paper which proposes salaries of up to £35,000 for the best classroom teachers, will help to solve the recruitment crisis.

■ Scotland's biggest teaching union yesterday angrily rejected a pay offer from local authorities calling it a "deep insult". Union bosses said the undisclosed offer on pay and conditions made by the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities earlier this week was "wholly inadequate".

The Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, enjoying a warm welcome at a school in his constituency - the £2.9m Victoria Dock Primary School in Hull - which he opened officially yesterday. It is the country's first 'private finance initiative' school. *John Furlong*

Trail of a scam that robbed Customs of £57m



Spice Girls
"Can't Dance"

Spice Girls "Can't Dance" has been the most successful single of the year, topping the charts for three weeks. The song is a cover of the 1978 hit by the same name, which was a major success for the original artists.

The song's success has led to a surge in sales for the album, which is now in its third week at the top of the charts. The single's success is a testament to the Spice Girls' enduring popularity and their ability to create hits that resonate with a wide audience.

ins: I'd
ughter
ned

WORTH

The song's success has led to a surge in sales for the album, which is now in its third week at the top of the charts. The single's success is a testament to the Spice Girls' enduring popularity and their ability to create hits that resonate with a wide audience.

The song's success has led to a surge in sales for the album, which is now in its third week at the top of the charts. The single's success is a testament to the Spice Girls' enduring popularity and their ability to create hits that resonate with a wide audience.

The song's success has led to a surge in sales for the album, which is now in its third week at the top of the charts. The single's success is a testament to the Spice Girls' enduring popularity and their ability to create hits that resonate with a wide audience.

rms put
t in pub

The song's success has led to a surge in sales for the album, which is now in its third week at the top of the charts. The single's success is a testament to the Spice Girls' enduring popularity and their ability to create hits that resonate with a wide audience.



Alan Carlton, right, ringleader of the smuggling gang, whose members had started to invest their ill-gotten millions in the high life of southern Spain



MSI

THE SCALE of the scam would have brought tears to the eyes of the average fags 'n' booze bootlegger plying their trade between Dover and Calais. A racket that avoided paying duties of at least £57m, and stacked up proceeds running into millions, so many millions that Customs investigators have still not been able to calculate exactly how much the swindle netted.

Britain's largest and best organised smuggling gang, which flooded Britain with cheap alcohol and cigarettes, has been smashed after a year-long international operation by Customs investigators.

More than 430 articulated lorryloads of top brands, including Bacardi, Malibu, Stella Artois drinks and Winston cigarettes were smuggled into Britain. The chiefs of the gang had started buying yachts and villas in Spain from their millions when they were arrested.

A series of trials in which eight Britons were convicted has just ended. Customs are now applying for confiscation orders against several of the men to seize their assets.

At the centre of the racket was Alan Carlton, 48, from Dartford, Kent, the proprietor of Carlton Transport, whose lorries smuggled the contraband.

Photographs of the tattooed and burly Carlton taken in Spain show a hard-faced man with a beer gut, a lurid taste in Hawaiian shirts, an ever-present mobile phone in his hand.

Also central was Alan Brown, the 62-year-old chubby, bearded former mayor of Burnham-on-Crouch in Essex. Using the alias of James Heywood, his company, Melrose Trading, was responsible for shipping the contraband.

The third key figure in the racket was Malcolm Hamilton, 54, from Cold Norton, Essex, who eventually gave evidence for the prosecution after going on the run to Turkey.

The racket started with duty-free alcohol and consignments of cigarettes being illegally diverted from the destinations stated on their customs documents. In a vast "carousel" operation, 40ft lorryloads started in England and drove to destinations in Europe before returning home fully loaded. At each point, high-value loads were picked up and dropped off to avoid tax and were sold on the black economy.

For a year, British Customs co-operated with European colleagues to smash the racket. More than 400 Customs officers finally swooped in simultaneous raids across the UK and Europe in late 1998.

Alan Reddrop, the officer in charge of operation, said yesterday: "This was very much an EU racket rather than a UK one. We got a lot of help from our colleagues in Belgium, Spain and France."

There have now been two major trials at Birmingham Crown Court, the first time prosecutions have successfully

BY PAUL LASHMAR

been brought in Britain for crimes committed elsewhere in the EU. Other prosecutions have taken place in Europe.

Evading tax on alcohol and tobacco is an increasing problem for Customs. They estimated that last year, revenue of £1bn on tobacco and £220m on alcohol was lost to the Treasury. The UK has the highest duties in the EU and Spain has the lowest.

Customs inquiries into the fraud began in autumn 1994 when investigators became suspicious when quantities of an unusual, cheap brand of whisky called "Laird" began turning up on the streets of Liverpool and cities in the North-west. The whisky had been held in a bonded warehouse in Gloucester and was supposed to have been shipped to Morocco via Spain.

Theo Customs became aware that the man behind the whisky operation was also looking for a bonded warehouse to store Winston cigarettes for shipment to Morocco. This was odd, because the Moroccan government has a stranglehold over the cigarette trade, and Morocco is better known as a country from which to smuggle tobacco to Europe.

The Customs documents for the alcohol and cigarettes were stamped with false Spanish Customs marks showing the goods had been exported from Spain to Morocco. In fact, neither the lorries nor the booze ever left the UK. Instead, their loads were sold through cash and carry outlets throughout Britain.

The gang then added a twist to the swindle. This time cigarettes actually went to Spain, but were never exported to Morocco. Instead, they were illicitly diverted on to the Spanish home market and sold at a profit. When Customs later went to check the delivery address in Casablanca where 20 lorryloads of cigarettes had purportedly been delivered, they found a small doorway at the end of a narrow alley in Rue de Fes.

The gang also began working on yet another elaborate scam. Lorryloads of beer and spirits were sent from the UK on real Customs documents showing the delivery address of a bonded warehouse in Antwerp - owned by a Belgian company also involved in the fraud.

The alcohol was transported to Antwerp. But Carlton's lorries were either turned round with the same load and smuggled back to the UK, or the goods were transferred to another Carlton transport lorry the next day and smuggled back.

"Many consignments from Antwerp were being conveyed by Carlton's lorries to premises in the Midlands, North-east of England and Scotland," said Alan Reddrop. "The loads were sold through cash and carry outlets in those areas."

In August and September 1998, suspicious local Customs officials in Spain and France ar-

rested several Carlton lorry drivers and seized their loads. On 12 September two Carlton lorries were intercepted in south-west France. One of the British drivers was being accompanied by a Spaniard who turned out to be a known tobacco smuggler. The vehicles

and their cigarettes were seized and the men arrested.

Eight days later, a meeting was held in Brussels between senior officials from the UK, Spain, Belgium and France. They agreed to work together to unravel the smugglers' operation. All movements of Car-

ton's lorries were monitored as they moved to and fro across EU borders. By November, Customs felt they had enough evidence to bring prosecutions. Simultaneous raids were mounted in Birmingham, Leeds, London and Glasgow, and 25 people were arrested.

Searches were also carried out in Belgium.

Customs believe the conspirators evaded duty on the 300 lorryloads on the carousel scam, a further 80 lorryloads diverted in the UK and 50 more loads of cigarettes sent to Spain. There have been two trials

dealing with different elements of the fraud. Carlton denied smuggling but was found guilty of the UK diversions. He was jailed for six and a half years. Brown and Francis Savage, 63, of east London, both admitted two charges of smuggling. Savage was jailed for three months.

Brown is ill and has yet to be sentenced. Hamilton will serve the equivalent of three years.

Four other lorry drivers, bribed with £500 cash bonuses for each trip, were given suspended sentences of 12 to 18 months for their part in diverting loads.

Emergency Service

don't have policies about giving up after ha

That's why at the AA we don't see more than just a breakdown service. Some recovery services just call the mechanics to tow the vehicle after just 30 minutes. The AA means repairing the car at a garage, costing you less. AA are dedicated to fixing your car by the roadside with no further labour costs. All in all, the AA is the best way to you and get you back on the road.

CALL FREE 0800 444 999

LINES OPEN 24 HRS OR JOIN ONLINE AT www.aa.co.uk

JOIN NOW AND A PARTNER JOINS FREE

AVAILABLE FOR A LIMITED PERIOD ONLY. CERTAIN CONDITIONS APPLY. CALL FOR DETAILS.

AA

To our members we're not just a breakdown service, we're the 4th Emergency Service.



Malcolm Hamilton, a key figure in the racket, relaxing with girlfriend Susan Jagger, who was not involved



Roddy Doyle: People laughed at 'horse in lift' scene

Horses of Dublin starve as floods hit grazing

THE SIGHT of horses grazing peacefully on patches of grass between the ugly concrete tower blocks in north Dublin has long been viewed as an alternative tourist attraction.

Tethered on patches of common ground or allowed to wander freely around the city, they are a familiar sight to residents and were even immortalised in the film *The Commitments*, where they were shown being led into the lift of a multi-storey building.

The writer Roddy Doyle was forced to defend the scene after it was greeted with howls of derision by those who had never been to the city. Dubliners hardly raised an eyebrow.

But the horses may not form part of the urban landscape for much longer.

Most of the animals belong to teenagers and young children who tether them on open land in parts of the city. Now

BY KATE WATSON-SMYTH

many horses and ponies have been left to fend for themselves, dying a slow death from starvation because their young owners simply cannot afford to feed them.

The constant downpours that have drenched the country since last summer have led to such severe flooding that there is a drastic shortage of fodder for both the horses, and for thousands of cattle on the farms.

This has led to a sharp increase in the prices of what little hay and silage there is, and many of the young owners - some barely teenagers - cannot afford the feed, because even a small bale of hay now costs £3.50.

Last Thursday, horse wardens removed seven dead animals from open land in west Dublin. Earlier, a further 42



A youngster out riding on a west Dublin estate, one of the areas where horses have been slowly starving through a lack of grass and hay for them to eat

John Cogill

emaciated horses were removed by local authority staff from open land nearby, between Clondalkin and Lucan to the west of the city.

They had been forced to eat raw earth in their desperate hunt for food.

The lack of fodder has also affected Ireland's dwindling number of livestock farmers. Last year's long spells of rain left little time for muddy pasture ground to recover, reducing the harvest of available hay usually held by farmers, and affecting output in east coast areas that normally generate a surplus.

Falling meat prices have meant that farmers cannot

raise the money to buy supplementary fodder and many have left their cattle to fend for themselves by grazing at the side of the road. Last week, in a stark illustration of the problem, a desperate farmer dumped 20 emaciated cows and calves near Roscarbery, in Co Cork.

The animals' identifying ear tags had been cut off before the carcasses were abandoned, to prevent the health authorities from tracing the owner.

Gerard Buckley, the local veterinary officer, said there had been other cases of animal dumping elsewhere in Co Cork and warned of potential health hazards. He predicted the prob-

lem would increase as the fodder crisis continues.

Irish farm organisations and animal welfare groups are becoming increasingly alarmed at the problem, and Claran O'Donovan, the chief executive of the Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ISPCA), was meeting officials from the Department of Agriculture yesterday to beg for emergency funds.

"We have had 25 per cent more rainfall than usual," he said. "Normally at this time of year the grass should be growing - but the rain is continuing, the ground has turned to mud with animals trampling on it and nothing will grow. So we

have a shortage of food left over from last summer and the prospect that no grass will grow until April or even May."

The ISPCA said that cattle were facing serious health problems because they had been left standing in water-logged fields with no dry shelter to lie down and rest.

The problem is worst in pockets of the country where few farmers are able to afford those supplies that are on sale at premium prices.

Areas suffering the worst fodder shortages include west Limerick, Roscommon and parts of Donegal. In badly hit areas the price of silage has more than doubled in 12

months. The crisis has led to an additional £100m turnover of commercial animal feedstuffs, up by 30 per cent on the normal sales level since last June.

Teagasc, the Irish state farm advisory body, has played down suggestions of a national feed emergency and urged farmers with problems to contact it for advice.

A spokesman confirmed that between 40,000 and 50,000 of the Irish Republic's 149,500 farmers are now in difficulty. The total number of farmers has dropped by 30,000 since 1995.

Derek Cunningham, a spokesman for the Irish Farmers' Association, confirmed that

the poor weather and the collapse in beef prices has caused the problem.

"There are a lot of farmers who don't have the cash and they've held on to animals they can't get rid of," he said. "Some people are finding it very difficult to get rid of poor-quality animals."

As a result many farmers have opted to sell far more cattle than usual since Christmas, leading to even lower prices from meat processors.

This has put them in a Catch 22 situation, squeezed between the prohibitively high feed prices and their reduced income as cattle markets yield lower revenues.

Dobson gives GPs power over NHS

A SEISMIC SHIFT in the NHS will switch control of the vast bulk of its £40bn budget from hospitals and health authorities to family doctors and nurses. The Health Bill revealed yesterday is to transform general practice into the driving force behind the NHS.

From April, 481 Primary Care Groups covering England will be established, replacing the discredited GP fundholding system, which covers half the population, with the eventual aim of giving the groups responsibility for all the care provided to their patients.

The Bill also establishes new mechanisms to prevent a repeat of the Bristol heart babies disaster by instituting checks on quality in every hospital, known as "clinical governance", and a hit squad called the Commission for Health Improvement to solve problems.

Other measures include the

BY JEREMY LAURANCE
Health Editor

creation of joint budgets between the NHS and social services, tough new rules to prevent drug company profiteering, and changes to the professional self-regulation of doctors.

At the heart of the Bill lie the plans for general practice. Initially, the Primary Care Groups, made up of about 50 GPs each, will advise health authorities on allocation of funds to hospitals and community services, moving by stages to take over their commissioning functions.

From April 2000, the first Primary Care Trusts will be set up, running community hospitals and district nursing services and offering a low-tech alternative to the hi-tech care of large hospitals. Patients will not notice the change at first, but the moves will accelerate the

trend to more care in GP surgeries and health centres. By giving family doctors and their professional colleagues control of the health budget, the range of services provided in surgeries and health centres will expand. Hospitals will become increasingly specialised and there will be fewer of them.

The question is whether family doctors and their colleagues have the will or the expertise to manage the vast sums involved.

Dr Jonathan Levy, a GP fundholder in Mill Hill, north London, said: "It is going to be awful. I am a doctor and I want to get on with treating patients. To get what you want you have to be on the committee but my main aim will be to ensure it doesn't take up too much time."

Frank Dobson, the Secretary of State for Health, said yesterday that the new freedoms for Primary Care Trusts would

lead to the development of walk-in health centres on the high street, providing day surgery, health screening, physiotherapy and advice clinics. Money from the NHS modernisation fund will pay for complete computerisation of doctors' surgeries.

He said: "The changes we are making will take time. But [they] will totally transform how the health service cares for patients. They will deliver a system moulded to the needs of the patient, rather than the current arrangements, which sometimes appear to be organised the other way around."

Department of Health officials said the aim of the Bill was to make the NHS faster and more convenient for patients, to guarantee standards across the country, and to ensure that health care and social services worked together to meet the needs of patients.

Amateur actress spoke of her hate for lover's pregnant wife

AN AMATEUR ACTRESS accused of murder confided that she hated her lover's wife only weeks before she killed her, a court heard yesterday.

Claire Brown told the jury at Chester Crown Court that her friend, Jenny Cupit, was upset when she heard Kathryn Linaker, a deputy head teacher, was pregnant.

Mrs Cupit, a former hairdresser of Borrowdale Avenue, Warrington, has pleaded not guilty to murdering Mrs Linaker, 33, in front of her four-month-old baby at her home in Penketh on 17 April last year. The mother-of-two, who is 24, has admitted manslaughter on the grounds of diminished responsibility but

BY HARRIET TOLPUTT

the Crown is contesting her plea. Mrs Brown met Mrs Cupit and her husband Nick at the Centenary Operatic Dramatic Society, where Mrs Linaker and her husband Chris were also members. Mrs Cupit and Mr Linaker began a relationship in January 1997. Mrs Brown told the court that Mrs Cupit had confided in her about the affair.

She said: "Jenny started crying, and she said Kathy was pregnant. Jenny was crying a lot but she made it clear that she was seeing Chris. I said she should leave them to it."

Mrs Brown told Alex Carlisle QC, for the prosecution, of a tele-

phone call just weeks before her death: "Jenny was upset, saying that Chris wasn't going to leave; that she hated Kathy because she had something that Jenny didn't. She said Kathy had a perfect family and that hers was breaking up."

Under cross-examination, the witness told Adrian Fulford QC, for the defence, that she was worried about the effect the affair was having on her friend.

The defendant's mother-in-law, Barbara Cupit, told the jury she believed the defendant had a split personality. She said: "Jenny was a very affectionate girl but could be very hurtful."

The court then heard the tape of Mrs Cupit's interview

with Detective Sergeant Ian Hughes at Warrington police station after the attack.

On the tape, Mrs Cupit said: "She [Mrs Linaker] said she hated me even if I wasn't involved with Chris. He paid me more attention than her."

"She came out of the kitchen with a knife. I grabbed the knife. I didn't mean it - I love her."

Mrs Cupit described to the officer how Mrs Linaker became angry: "I told her to calm down, and that we would talk about it and sort it out. She was really starting to scare me. She came at me with a small knife."

"I turned and grabbed her, and cut my hand on the knife." The trial continues.

UNIQUE 10 YEAR GUARANTEE
So that you can buy in complete confidence, we underwrite the Regatta pilot chronograph with a full 10 year guarantee.

7 DAY MONEY BACK WARRANTY

Sewills
MAKER TO THE ADMIRALTY

The 'Regatta' Pilot Chronograph

A truly evocative military timepiece.

"Patented" double rotor highly accurate quartz movement

Polished stainless steel case with scratchproof crystal glass

Water resistant to 50 metres

Subsidiary seconds and 30 minute timer dials with date window at six-o'clock

Luminous hands and numerals on black dial

Black sharkskin leather strap

ONLY £149.95
includes FREE delivery

ONLY AVAILABLE FROM SEWILLS

YOU NEED SEND NO MONEY NOW

To reserve your 'Regatta' Pilot's Watch

CALL DIRECT ON FREEPHONE 0800 731 9997

Lines open 8.30am - 5.00pm Mon - Fri and 10.00am - 4.00pm Sat and Sun

Or complete and fax/post the coupon opposite.

Fax on 0151 708 6777 or post to:
Sewills Sales, FREEPOST (LV 7185), PO Box 251, Liverpool L69 3BR.

I wish to reserve my 'Regatta' Pilot Chronograph. I understand that I need send no money now and that I will be invoiced for £149.95 on acceptance of my order. PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY Includes FREE UK delivery

Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

To help us facilitate delivery please ensure that you enter your telephone number

daytime _____ evening _____

You may return your Regatta Pilot Chronograph within 7 days of receipt for any reason and have full refund or replacement.

Wasp

Nato may send 200,000 to Kosovo

AS RENEWED violence erupted in Kosovo, Nato military chiefs stepped up detailed preparations for the politically charged option of sending ground troops to Kosovo. Up to 200,000 men could be required, depending on the outcome of negotiations between Belgrade and the ethnic Albanians on a settlement of the conflict.

By KATHERINE BUTLER in Brussels

Yugoslav army tanks began firing at Kosovo Liberation Army positions near the village of Ljupce, about nine miles north of Pristina.

Panicking refugees, who had taken cover in Albanian homes in the area to escape fighting two days earlier, piled on tractors and horse carts to flee what they feared was an imminent onslaught. One Serb police-

man was killed in the attack on the village of Rogovo, about 45 miles south-west of Pristina, near the Albanian border. International monitors confirmed the "shocking" death toll, which the Albanians claimed was brought about by an army assault on a civilian bus.

The raid occurred as the six-nation Contact Group called all parties in the conflict to an international conference next week at Rambouillet near Paris to negotiate a settlement with-

in seven days, granting "substantial autonomy" - but not independence - to the Albanian-majority province.

If these talks succeed, then deployment of Nato troops on the ground will be essential.

"Clearly, guaranteeing implementation of the deal will be a key part of the negotiations," a Nato official said. "Otherwise the agreement will not hold up, especially where you have a hell of a lot of weapons, a proliferation of armed groups,

a legacy of hatred and history of human rights abuse."

Germany yesterday joined Britain and France in pledging troops to police an autonomy deal and Washington is edging towards acceptance of the idea.

Even so Nato officials admit that it is extremely difficult to plan precisely for a ground troop presence, when the shape of any political settlement is still unknown.

It remains to be seen for example whether unarmed veri-

fers from the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (Osce) would continue to have a role.

Three scenarios have been outlined by military planners. These suggest that 36,000 is the minimum number of troops required to monitor a ceasefire and peace agreement if the talks go ahead and produce the desired result. A 2,300 strong French-led Nato unit stationed in Macedonia for the evacuation of Osce monitors would proba-

bly provide the vanguard of this presence. If talks break down with no agreement on the political future of Kosovo but a ceasefire holds, then Nato planners estimate that 60,000 men will be needed - as well as an explicit agreement with President Milosevic on the terms of a ground troop presence, Nato diplomats said.

If talks fail and there is no ceasefire then 200,000 troops would be required to impose peace. This would drag Nato

into a protracted engagement and even full-scale war with the Serbs. Nato planners say troop deployment in this case would have to be preceded by an aerial bombing campaign to cripple Serb defences.

It is conceivable but unlikely that Sfor, the 34,000 strong Nato troop presence in Bosnia, would be "siphoned off" to boost the numbers in Kosovo, one Nato official said adding: "We will still need a strong presence in Bosnia."

Lewinsky's evidence to be on video

THE ONE-TIME White House trainee, Monica Lewinsky, faces further questioning about her relationship with President Clinton on Monday, when she becomes the first of three witnesses called to testify in the Senate impeachment trial.

Under the rules passed by the Senate late on Thursday, however, the interview will take the form of a "deposition" - questioning under oath in private.

Whether Ms Lewinsky or either of the other two named witnesses - Mr Clinton's businessman friend, Vernon Jordan, and his aide, Sidney Blumenthal - appear in the Senate in person will be decided only after the depositions have been taken and made available to senators. Although the interviews will be videotaped, there is no provision at present either for them to be viewed by the Senate or to be made public.

The outline arrangements for the continuation of the trial, which stuttered through a series of acrimonious stalemates this week, envisage final votes on the two Articles of Impeachment against Mr Clinton - the one alleging perjury, the other obstruction of justice - on or before 12 February, the day before a congressional holiday for Abraham Lincoln's birthday. Democrats' hopes of

By MARY DEJEVSKY in Washington

making that date definite failed, however, as did their attempt to limit the duration of the depositions and to prevent the tapes of the witnesses' testimony ever becoming public. All these highly contentious points will be subject to Senate votes once the depositions have been taken.

Each of the witnesses will be questioned by one of the House prosecutors, and two senators will preside. Defence lawyers for Mr Clinton will be able to cross-examine them. One day has been set aside for each, so the deposition stage should be over by next Thursday, when the Senate is set to reconvene.

While the Republicans were generally satisfied the trial would proceed, there was disappointment in the Senate and in wider political circles that the arrangements had had to be put to a vote and that the vote had been on party lines. Behind the scenes, the White House was also concerned about a plan for ending the trial that was gaining currency in the Senate. This would entail approval of a "finding of fact" statement, which would set out what senators believed to be the truth of the Lewinsky affair before they voted on whether to convict.



Soldiers attempting to prevent a mob from breaking into the Red Cross supply centre in Armenia, Colombia, yesterday

Henry Romero

Rioting breaks out in Armenia

By PHIL DAVISON in Armenia

FOOD RIOTS broke out in this earthquake-battered Colombian city yesterday despite the arrival of 3,000 army troops to maintain order.

Starving quake victims, including well-dressed housewives, old men and schoolchildren, stormed down city streets, shouting that they had seen none of the food pouring in from around the world.

Sturdy young men kicked the metal shutters of a downtown supermarket until they gave way. As word spread that troops were on their way, they threw food outside for the others to pick up.

People fought among themselves to grab anything they could find. Food was scattered across the street and the most desperate victims scooped up handfuls of rice.

When troops arrived, they were obviously confused and reluctant to shoot. "We're not going to shoot our own people. We're here for their security," said an unidentified army colonel. "These people are desperate. They need food."

The soldiers' reaction appeared to isolate President Andres Pastrana and local politicians, widely criticised for failing to distribute several hundred tons of food that have arrived since Monday's quake.

GPs HS

Slap in face for young blondes as over-40 wins TV bias case

By MARY DEJEVSKY in Washington

IF YOU have ever been infuriated by the formulaic TV news shows in the US, which pair a blandly handsome male of any age with a decidedly underforties blonde, this verdict is for you. A court in Connecticut has awarded Janet Peckinpaugh, who is now very much the "wrong" side of 40 but still almost blond, more than \$8m (£5m) in compensation after she was dropped as a \$200,000-a-year news presenter.

The award, which is subject to appeal, is for lost earnings, hurt feelings and breach of contract. Within hours, the im-



Peckinpaugh: Her grey matter did not count

women with mostly older men as mirroring "the man and woman in the audience".

Ms Peckinpaugh had sued the WFSB network, which is an affiliate of CBS, on multiple counts of sex and age discrimination. She claimed that she had elected to remain at the sta-

tion in earlier years - turning down lucrative offers from national stations - because of assurances that she would be able to "grow grey" on the air. Unfortunately for Ms Peckinpaugh, this is not what happened. Her network turned out to be just like all of the others.

One day in 1994, she was called in to re-audition for her job, paired with a new male presenter. So were the two other female presenters. The tapes were shown to a "cross-section" of viewers, and Ms Peckinpaugh - the oldest of the three - came last. Her contract was not renewed, and she was reduced to an early-morning presenter's job at a much smaller station on 20 per cent of her previous pay.

One of Ms Peckinpaugh's complaints was that the station never even considered pairing

two of the women presenters, so determined were they to keep the male-female pairing that pervades American TV. Almost the only time two female presenters are paired is on public holidays (when the men seem to get the day off) and on minor specialist stations, like the Weather Channel and Court TV. Even then, the male-female pairing is more usual.

Strictly speaking, the jury found WFSB liable for discrimination on the basis of sex, not age, but the two were so closely bound together that it hardly mattered. The few women who survive on screen past their forties become interviewers or executives. The coveted role of news presenter goes to the men.

If he needs extra authority, he is paired with a bubbly or modest young woman.

easy@demon[no.4]

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 9

fill in the missing number in this sequence .

what could be easier than that ? getting on-line with demon of course . we've made it so easy , anyone can do it . just call us on 0800 027 9196 or scribble your name and address anywhere on this ad and send it to us at freepost demon (yes , that's all you have to write) . we'll send you our free 30-day trial cd . it doesn't get any easier than that .



Demon Internet
0800 027 9196

A Scottish Telecom Company

www.demon.net email: sales@demon.net

IN BRIEF

Denmark's only Rembrandt stolen

TWO MEN overpowered an elderly security guard in Copenhagen and stole two paintings - one a Rembrandt - from an art gallery in Nivaa, 12 miles north of the Danish capital. The Rembrandt - *Portrait of a Lady* - dated 1632, was the only certified genuine work by the Dutch master in Denmark.

Life for killer who beheaded victim

A WHITE labourer in Independence, Virginia, convicted of burning a black man alive and beheading him, was jailed for life. Emmett Cressell, 38, apologised for the anguish suffered by the victim's family but said he was innocent.

Classes condemn homosexuality

SUNDAY SCHOOL lessons on how homosexuals can "change" will be offered for the first time to adults at US Southern Baptist churches tomorrow. They are aimed at condemning homosexuality but not homosexuals.

Vow to trap Cape Town bombers

SOUTH AFRICA'S Minister for Safety and Security, Sydney Mufamadi, vowed to end a wave of urban terror in Cape Town and catch bombers who injured 11 people in an explosion at the city's main police station on Thursday.

Levi's building in cancer scare

THE JEANS MAKER Levi Strauss has confirmed it abandoned part of its San Francisco HQ last October after seven women workers developed breast cancer. The Saddleman building was declared safe after an inquiry.

£1,700 a week for EU 'fraud busters'

By STEPHEN CASTLE in Brussels

MEMBERS OF a committee investigating fraud, nepotism and mismanagement in the European Commission will not go unrewarded, sources revealed yesterday.

Each of the five-strong team will be offered £8,800 a month, plus allowances for travel and accommodation, with a daily allowance of £210 for staying in Brussels. A separate sum has been set aside for office space if necessary.

The proposed spending of more than £100,000 will come from European Union funds, split between the Parliament and the Commission.

The committee, made up of senior ex-judges and administrators, was difficult to assemble. Two of the three shortlisted Britons refused to serve and the other was replaced because he is related to an MEP. They have to produce a preliminary

report by 15 March, and finish the investigation by June. The committee was set up as a result of the bitter conflict between the European Parliament and the European Commission over fraud allegations.

Parliamentarians were deflected from their threat to sack the entire European Commission party by the promise of the new investigation. Yesterday the European Commission said it would waive the confidentiality rule for officials called by the committee.

Roy Perry, Conservative budgetary control committee spokesman, said: "This committee may be a fig leaf, and could be a very expensive fig leaf. It is strange for them to be paid by the month, rather than a one-off figure, or by results."

ie of her
lant wife

A 'witch' is burnt in rural Pakistan

THE RAIN finally came to the Punjab last week. Two days of downpour turned its red dust to mud. The fields are now spotted with rust-coloured pools reflecting a heavy, grey sky.

The land is fertile, irrigated by the huge canal system built by the British. Thousands of villages, still known by the numbers the Raj administrators gave them, sit like islands in a sea of wheat, cotton and sugar cane. To the east lies the Cholistan desert, known locally as the walking sands.

Two weeks ago, in the village of Chak 100P, an old, mad woman was burnt alive. The incident barely made the local papers, let alone the national ones. But the story of Muradmai is the story of modern Pakistan.

How Muradmai died is simple. She burnt to death, screaming, when villagers poured petrol over her and lit it. Why she died is less

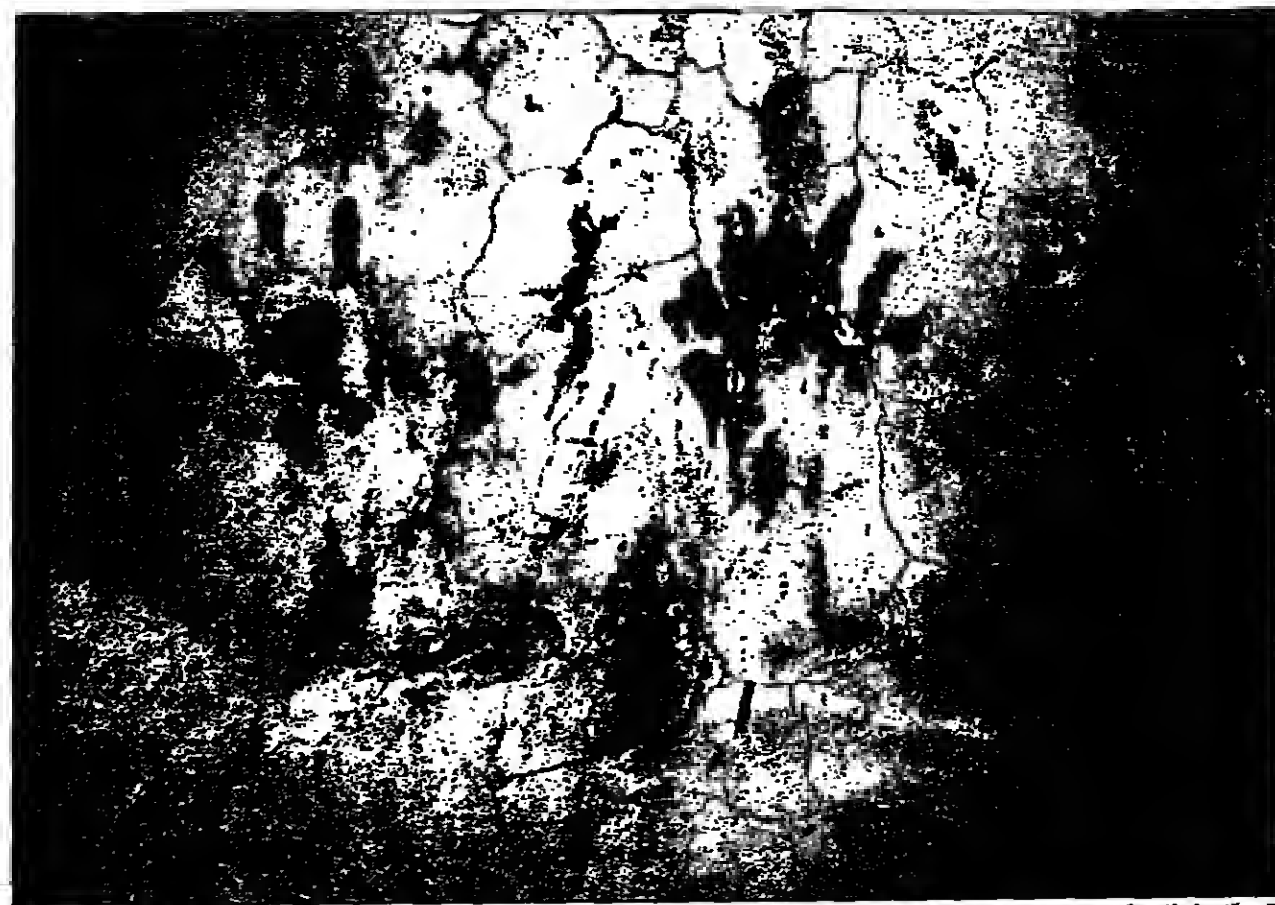
BY JASON BURKE
in Chak 100P, Punjab

straightforward. It is a mixture of Chaucer, Arthur Miller and Umberto Eco, touching madness and witchcraft, superstition, Islam, racism and an administration rotten to the core.

Muradmai's nightmare began two years ago when, her family says, she started behaving "stupidly". Her moods swung from ranting anger to passivity. She also began disappearing for weeks at a time.

Last June, a doctor diagnosed her as paranoid schizophrenic and referred her to a hospital in Lahore, 300 miles to the north. The referral was a joke - her family could not even afford the bus fare, let alone medication. Her husband took another wife and her wanderings worsened.

At 8am on 8 January, Muradmai was found sitting in



Muradmai's handprints on the wall of the shrine from where she was dragged and burnt to death in the Punjab village of Chak 100P (right)

Jason Burke

Chak 100P's village shrine surrounded by burnt paper. The villagers say she had been burning pages from the shrine's Koran, the Muslim holy book.

A group of men dragged her to the village square. Her fingers were cut off and her eyes put out, probably with a stick. Two men poured petrol over her and lit it. Other villagers then stoked the flames and tyres filled with kerosene were dropped over her. When the police arrived, around noon, Muradmai was very dead and a crowd of 70 gloating men stood around her corpse. "She

burnt the Koran, so we burnt her," they told officers.

As far as the police are concerned the reasons for the murder are clear: "These people acted in a regrettable way but are strong Muslims. We have identified the suspects and they will be brought to book," promised Maqsood Ahmed, the local police chief.

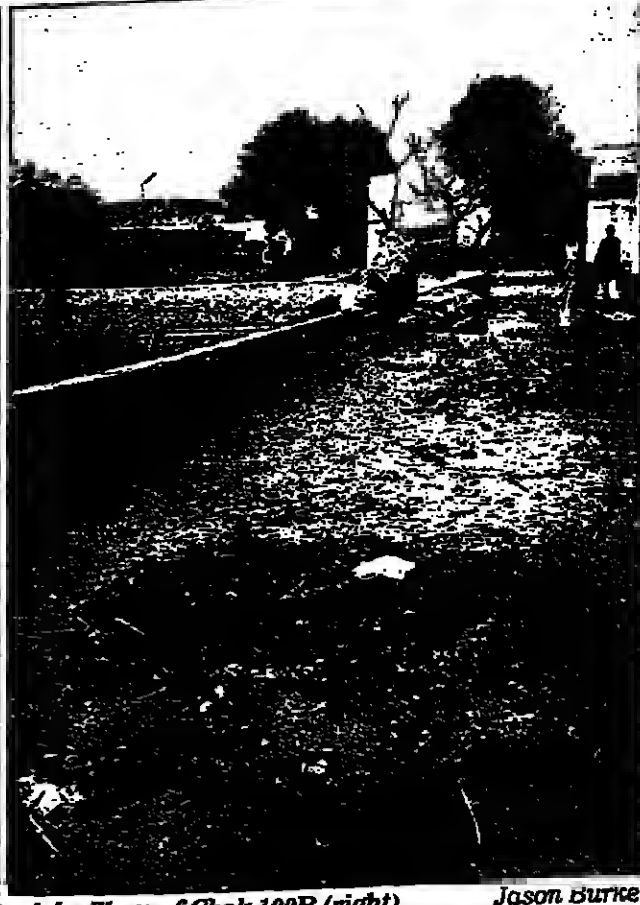
The village elders agree that the case is straightforward. Chak 100P's headman, Ishfaq, said the woman died because the villagers "love Islam".

"It was the young men who did it," Ishfaq said. "Their religion is angrier than ours was at that age. But to burn the Koran is a terrible thing. I'm not saying what happened was good but such anger is difficult to contain."

However, it is not certain the paper Muradmai burnt was from the Koran at all. False allegations of Koran burning - a criminal act punishable by death under Pakistan's blasphemy laws - are a favourite ploy in family feuds or land disputes. They are also often made against ethnic or religious minorities. Last week neither the police nor the vil-

lage elders were able to produce the Koran Muradmai was supposed to have burnt. Instead, according to some locals, Muradmai may actually have burnt only paper charms given her by a local holy man - a "pir" - in the hope that her mental health would be restored. Such rituals are rarely remarked on. But Muradmai was already a target.

"This woman was an outcast. She was hated and feared for supposedly casting curses or, at the very least, bringing bad luck on the village," said Dr Aslam Nuru, a local teacher.



Muradmai's handprints on the wall of the shrine from where she was dragged and burnt to death in the Punjab village of Chak 100P (right)

Jason Burke

"The accusation of burning a Koran was an excuse for the lynching. It was a witch-hunt, like in Europe centuries ago."

According to Akram Bhatti, who owns much of the land around Chak 100P, there were other reasons for the animosity suffered by Muradmai. He says she had transgressed a number of basic codes: she was a single woman, wandering alone and not properly in "purdah" - the strict seclusion of women traditionally followed in rural Pakistan. She was mentally ill. And she was also Sorikhi - a local ethnic minor-

ity - in a village of Punjabis. He says the police took three hours to come, despite their headquarters being only a 20-minute drive away.

But the crucial factor, said Bhatti, was that Muradmai had no one who was prepared to protect her. "She needed someone to look after her ... but no one came," he said.

In a society where the strong bully the weak and the weak prey on the even weaker, Muradmai's memory will last only as long as it takes the rain to wash a smudge of ash from the red Punjabi soil.

Religious gangs bring fear to Indonesia

BY DIARMID O'SULLIVAN
in Jakarta

ON THE tropical Indonesian island of Ambon, people live in fear of Christian and Muslim gangs who have murdered as many as 200 people in a week. The violence is the latest of several riots, and fears are growing that religious and racial tensions are reaching breaking point.

For the past week, people have been pulled from cars by gangs and stabbed. Murdered for having the wrong religion on their identity cards. Police say that at least 65 people have been killed, with another 62 in hospital. Unofficial totals go up to 200.

An uneasy lull has now settled, although there are daily reports of violence on nearby islands. Only a handful of shops are open. People leave their homes only to look for food.

In Ambon city, epicentre of the killing, soldiers armed with ageing rifles guard every street, but admit, privately, that they cannot stop the violence if it flares up again.

"It is quiet, but it's not under control. Violence could break out at any time. There's a feeling of vengeance because so many people died," says a Dutch journalist in Ambon, once a base for Holland's spice-trading empire.

Most Ambonese are Christians, and many of the victims were Muslim immigrants from the nearby island of Sulawesi.

Most of Indonesia's 200 million people are technically Muslims, though many are not devout. The country has a reputation for being more tolerant



An Ambonese man walks past houses-cum-shops gutted in riots

AP

than some other big Asian countries with a mix of religions, such as India and Pakistan. Yet since the fall of President Suharto last May, that reputation has started to unravel.

There have been smaller communal riots in recent weeks on other Indonesian islands, including Timor, Sulawesi and Sumatra. Seven people, most of them Ambonese gangsters, were hatched by Muslims in Jakarta in November. It isn't clear yet if revenge for these deaths is a factor in the violence.

The police say that hoodlums from Jakarta may be involved, but the investigation is going on.

The violence in Indonesia is not as widespread as some foreign news reports suggest. Most areas of this vast archipelago are still peaceful. But the problems are likely to get worse.

The first free elections in 40 years are due to be held on 7 June, and many people fear bloodshed as more than a hundred parties jostle for support. An economic crisis has driven millions of people into poverty, and street crime is rising.

Many people say that elements of the old Suharto regime are stirring up the riots because they fear being called to account for misuse of power.

The former president is being investigated for corruption. He still has many loyalists in the army, the bureaucracy and the criminal underworld.

Abdurrahman Wani, an influential and outspoken Muslim leader, went to see Suharto on Wednesday night at his Jakarta mansion. "I asked him to use his influence to stop his followers from causing a commotion which could disrupt the elections, including the Ambon case and riots in other areas," he said. It was not clear what answer he got.

Much depends on what the armed forces do. The soldiers, divided and unpopular, have been unable to stop the riots. Their commander, General Wiranto, is both a cautious reformer and a protégé of Suharto.

"I think we are nearing the point where Wiranto will have to make a break with his past and clamp down on Suharto's old guard," says Marzuki Darusman, who heads the government's human rights team.

Dixons STAR WARS ROGUE SQUADRON OUT NOW

PRICE CHECK
PRICE - WE CAN'T BE BEATEN!
Every week we compare prices in the national press so you KNOW you can't buy better! If you find you can, we guarantee to refund the difference.



STAR WARS - ROGUE SQUADRON

You are Luke Skywalker, the apprentice Jedi and leader of the legendary Rogue Squadron. The stakes are high and the hazards are higher. Do, or do not, there is no try - May the Force be with you! Discover the secret password and fly the Millennium Falcon.

© LucasFilm Ltd. All rights reserved.

£44.99
Dixons Deal

STAR WARS PACK

PLUS Star Wars Rogue Squadron
PLUS Shadow of the Empire
PLUS GoldenEye
Total Special Package Price
£159.95

£159.95

Dixons

There's a Great Deal going on

ON-LINE SHOP: www.dixons.co.uk

Part of DSG Retail Ltd

ORDER HOTLINE: 0800 60 22 66

Play & Save
The more you spend the greater the discount. Ask in-store for details on how to claim your Dixons discount voucher worth up to 40% off any Games or PC Software title or games accessory.

C.P. HART SALE

WAREHOUSE CLEARANCE SALE GENUINE, UNREPEATABLE BARGAINS

£325* Roll Top Baths Single Ended Cast Iron

£400* Roll Top Baths Double Ended Cast Iron

*excluding VAT



40% off selected bathroom ranges



15% off Siematic kitchens

or free installation

or free American fridge/freezer

or £1,500 towards appliances or a CP HART bathroom**

LAST WEEKEND OF SALE

Free customer Parking Nationwide Delivery
Newham Terrace, Hercules Road, SE1 Phone 0171 902 1000
Regents Park Road, Primrose Hill, NWT Phone 0171 586 9856

Open Sundays

THE INDEPENDENT
Saturday 30 January 1999

THE INDEPENDENT
Saturday 30 January 1999

FOREIGN NEWS/15

Misery engulfs millions as Africa seethes with more wars than ever

BY ALEX DUVAL SMITH

MORE COUNTRIES in sub-Saharan Africa are currently involved in wars than at any time in the 40 years that have passed since they began to gain independence.

It was easy, during the Cold War, to see Africa's crises in terms of East-West allegiances, with a soupçon of Francophone-Anglophone rivalry thrown in. But now the causes of conflicts within and beyond the artificial borders traced by colonial powers are different and more basic. Millions of Africans are displaced and thousands are dying in wars due to greed, a lust for power, ethnicity, and the poisonous combination of a brain drain and widespread illiteracy.

Democratic elections seem to make little difference; registration or ballot-counting procedures are often shams.

The West ponders international debt relief, because it impoverishes people. But as one delayed passenger at Dakar said while he watched a stream of heads of state in private jets fly in for a summit: "We are delayed for them and the only thing the world's banks want to do is relieve them of their debt so they can buy more planes."

In Sierra Leone, from which the Nigerian-led Ecomog force may withdraw once it has secured the capital, Freetown, a weak, democratically elected government is threatened by army rebels and thugs who are backed by Charles Taylor, the Liberian president.

Mr Taylor, a warlord turned democrat, is paranoid about coups and greedy for Sierra Leone's diamonds. The small West African country has been at war on and off, since its first democratic elections in 1996.

Burkina Faso has sent mercenaries to fight with the rebels in Sierra Leone. The forces resisting the Ecomog effort to secure President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah have links to rebels in Casamance, the southern Senegalese region that may have oil, and Guinea-Bissau which shares its ethnic make-up.

In the Horn of Africa, Ethiopia and Eritrea are once

again at daggers drawn over a border dispute the Organisation of African Unity has failed to quell.

Eritrea's President, Isaias Efwarki, insists on a comprehensive redrawing of the colonial border. But Ethiopia wants Eritrean troops to withdraw to a borderline that its troops breached in May last year.

Somalia has not had a government since 1991 when the former dictator, Mohammed Siad Barre, was overthrown after 21 years. Ethnic warlords have since carved up the country. At least 100,000 people have died and the United Nations has given up on the region.

In Sudan, John Garang's Sudan People's Liberation Army launched an attack in 1993 against the Islamic government, seeking autonomy for African Christians and animists in the south. The latest truce is about to expire and no plan exists for a referendum on a north-south division of the country.

In Congo-Brazzaville, fighting resumed this week between the Cobras, soldiers loyal to General Denis Sassou N'Gessou, who came to power 18 months ago, and his Ninja fighters - militias loyal to former leader Pascal Lissouba. The fighting is not linked to the war in the neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo.

The wars involving Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Central African Republic, Zimbabwe, Namibia and Angola have become interlinked. The reason is that the DRC leader, Laurent Desire Kabila - who overthrew Mobutu Sese Seko two years ago - and his enemies have used old rivalries and new fears for their own ends. Mr Kabila has Angola, Zimbabwe and Namibia on his side against rebels - backed by the other neighbouring countries - who believe he is mismanaging DRC, a country the size of Western Europe.

Mr Kabila ousted Mobutu with the help of the country's ethnic Tutsis and their cousins from Rwanda. But last August, feeling threatened by them, he

ousted all Tutsis from positions of power in the capital, Kinshasa. The conflict has rekindled Hutu-Tutsi hatred; in Burundi this week, 135 people were killed in a Hutu area. Zimbabwe, whose President Robert Mugabe supports President Kabila, is bordering on chaos, with rumours of a military coup.

In Angola, the government of Jose Eduardo Dos Santos this week conceded that it had lost Mbanza, gateway to the oil town of Soyo, to rebels from Unita - the rebel movement led by Jonas Savimbi, which controls much of the east of the country and its diamonds.

For more than 30 years, Unita was backed by South Africa and the US against the Soviet-supported MPLA, now in government. Two weeks ago, the United Nations said it would pull out of the war-torn country, sparking fears of a forthcoming humanitarian disaster when aid cannot safely be delivered to the population.

Ghosts of the Cold War, diamonds, oil, colonial boundaries, arms dealing and ethnicity seem all to fuel Africa's disasters. But there are success stories in Africa, too. At any given time, out of the continent's 600 million-odd people, the majority are at peace.

Former French colonies, though poor, have achieved a measure of economic stability through the CFA franc - tied to the French franc despite a devaluation in 1997.

South Africa will have elections later this year and Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa, is apparently dismantling military control. Uganda is winning the war against Aids.

Next week, President Nelson Mandela of South Africa will deliver his last state of the nation address before handing over to Thabo Mbeki.

There are doubts over Mbeki's vision for the future but he has made what he calls the "African Renaissance" a centrepiece of it. The concept of a renaissance may be European, but it is all Africa has. And it may just result in a solution to the continent's problems.

Misery engulfs millions as Africa seethes with more wars than ever

BY ALEX DUVAL SMITH

MORE COUNTRIES in sub-Saharan Africa are currently involved in wars than at any time in the 40 years that have passed since they began to gain independence.

It was easy, during the Cold War, to see Africa's crises in terms of East-West allegiances, with a soupçon of Francophone-Anglophone rivalry thrown in.

But now the causes of conflicts within and beyond the artificial borders traced by colonial powers are different and more basic. Millions of Africans are displaced and thousands are dying in wars due to greed, a lust for power, ethnicity, and the poisonous combination of a brain drain and widespread illiteracy.

Democratic elections seem to make little difference; registration or ballot-counting procedures are often shams.

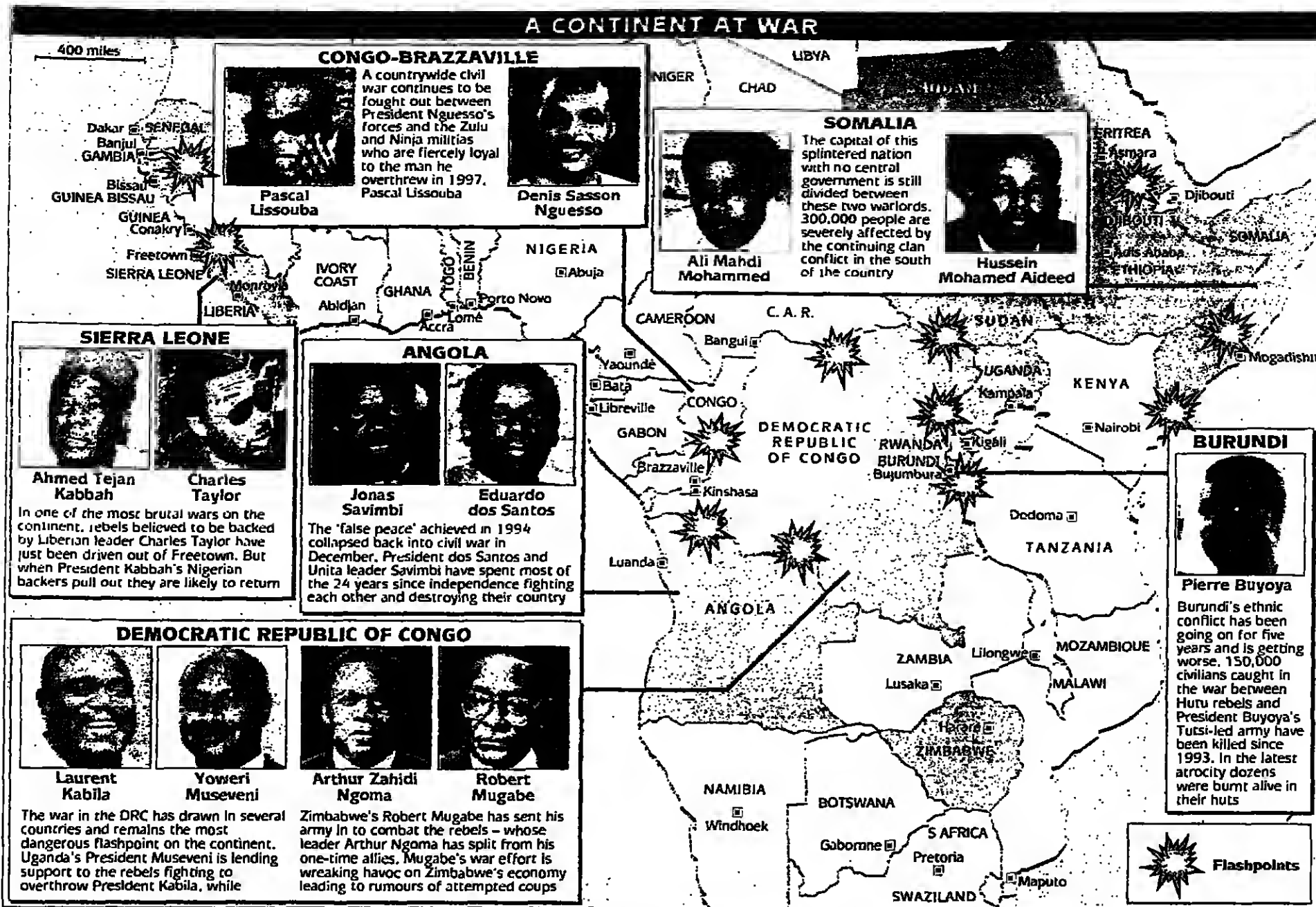
The West ponders international debt relief, because it impoverishes people. But as one delayed passenger at Dakar said while he watched a stream of heads of state in private jets fly in for a summit: "We are delayed for them and the only thing the world's banks want to do is relieve them of their debt so they can buy more planes."

In Sierra Leone, from which the Nigerian-led Ecomog force may withdraw once it has secured the capital, Freetown, a weak, democratically elected government is threatened by army rebels and thugs who are backed by Charles Taylor, the Liberian president.

Mr Taylor, a warlord turned democrat, is paranoid about coups and greedy for Sierra Leone's diamonds. The small West African country has been at war on and off, since its first democratic elections in 1996.

Burkina Faso has sent mercenaries to fight with the rebels in Sierra Leone. The forces resisting the Ecomog effort to secure President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah have links to rebels in Casamance, the southern Senegalese region that may have oil, and Guinea-Bissau which shares its ethnic make-up.

In the Horn of Africa, Ethiopia and Eritrea are once



again at daggers drawn over a border dispute the Organisation of African Unity has failed to quell.

Eritrea's President, Isaias Efwarki, insists on a comprehensive redrawing of the colonial border. But Ethiopia wants Eritrean troops to withdraw to a borderline that its troops breached in May last year.

Somalia has not had a government since 1991 when the former dictator, Mohammed Siad Barre, was overthrown after 21 years. Ethnic warlords have since carved up the country. At least 100,000 people have died and the United Nations has given up on the region.

In Sudan, John Garang's Sudan People's Liberation

Army launched an attack in 1993 against the Islamic government, seeking autonomy for African Christians and animists in the south. The latest truce is about to expire and no plan exists for a referendum on a north-south division of the country.

In Congo-Brazzaville, fighting resumed this week between

the Cobras, soldiers loyal to General Denis Sassou N'Gessou, who came to power 18 months ago, and his Ninja fighters - militias loyal to former leader Pascal Lissouba. The fighting is not linked to the war in the neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo.

The wars involving Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, the Demo-

cratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Central African Republic, Zimbabwe, Namibia and Angola have become interlinked. The reason is that the DRC leader, Laurent Desire Kabila - who overthrew Mobutu Sese Seko two years ago - and his enemies have used old rivalries and new fears for their own ends. Mr Kabila has Angola, Zimbabwe and Namibia on his side against rebels - backed by the other neighbouring countries - who believe he is mismanaging DRC, a country the size of Western Europe.

Mr Kabila ousted Mobutu with the help of the country's ethnic Tutsis and their cousins from Rwanda. But last August, feeling threatened by them, he

ousted all Tutsis from positions of power in the capital, Kinshasa. The conflict has rekindled Hutu-Tutsi hatred; in Burundi this week, 135 people were killed in a Hutu area. Zimbabwe, whose President Robert Mugabe supports President Kabila, is bordering on chaos, with rumours of a military coup.

In Angola, the government of Jose Eduardo Dos Santos this week conceded that it had lost Mbanza, gateway to the oil town of Soyo, to rebels from Unita - the rebel movement led by Jonas Savimbi, which controls much of the east of the country and its diamonds.

THE ULTIMATE ALARMED ROLL UP GARAGE DOOR

"I thought having automatic garage doors was a luxury... now I can't imagine life without them." MR E YEOVIL

"My old garage door was so heavy... I didn't realise life could be so easy." MR D MANCHESTER

The only Automatic Garage Door available that comes with all these benefits

- Audible alarm in case of forced entry**
Our standard garage door comes with an integral alarm system.
- Battery back-up in case of power failure**
Battery pack cuts in automatically when power fails.
- Automatic handstop**
Open the door from the comfort of your own car.
- Infra red safety beam**
If the beam is broken the door will automatically stop.

01929 554901

Please send me a copy of the Nationwide brochure today

Name: _____

Telephone No: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Send to: Nationwide, Freeport, Wareham, Dorset BH20 4BR

NATIONWIDE AUTOMATIC GARAGE DOORS

NO STAMP REQUIRED

LEGAL & GENERAL FAMILY PROTECTION PLAN

Up to £300,000 FREE Accidental Death Cover

You'd give the world to help protect your children.

All we ask is £5 a day*

Your family is the most important thing in your life. But have you considered how they'd cope with your death? With the loss of income? And the extra bills?

Thankfully, Legal & General's Family Protection Plan offers a simple, affordable way to help secure the financial future of those you love most.

*Equivalent to £6.08 a month.

For just 20p a day a non-smoking man aged 30 could get £53,200 of cover for 15 years (acceptance subject to individual details). You select the amount and length of cover you require (within certain limits) and the lump sum is paid should you die during that period. Additional options available include Terminal Illness Cover, Critical Illness Cover, Indemnity and Waiver of Premium.

Call 0500 33 66 66 for your no-obligation quotation or send for an information pack. Your family is depending on it.

free £10 Interflora voucher

Call now for an instant quote 0500 33 66 66

Please send me a personal quotation and information pack on the Legal & General Family Protection Plan. Post to: Legal & General, FREEPOST ISWC 0467, Cardiff CF1 1YW

Surname: Mr/Ms/Mrs/Ms/Ms _____

Forename(s) _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Tel No. Home _____ Tel No. Work _____

Date of Birth _____

I am a smoker ☐ Non-smoker ☐

Cover required £ _____

Term required _____ years

I do not wish to receive information on other Legal & General products. ☐

Visit our Website at www.LandG.com

Legal & General

trust us to deliver

Jordan's heir is courted by all

FROM ACROSS the Middle East, there has come an intriguing – not to say astonishing – chorus of approval for Crown Prince Abdullah of Jordan. In the pages of *Babel* – produced by the one editor you would never contradict, Saddam Hussein's son Uday, readers have been told Abdullah's appointment is "one of the King's most intelligent political decisions since the start of the Sixties".

In the Gulf, the United States Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, talked of King Hussein's

BY ROBERT FISK
in Beirut

"magnificent job" in arranging for his succession.

In Jerusalem, a former Israeli defence ministry official, Alon Pinkas, said Abdullah was an "excellent student" in America. Mr Pinkas should know; he taught Jordan's future king at Georgetown university.

But when Saddam Hussein, Madeleine Albright and the Israelis all sing the same tune, something has to be wrong. If the Israelis were prepared to



Crown Prince Abdullah (left) is congratulated in Amman on his appointment by Abdulhakef Arabiat, leader of the Islamic Action Front. Reuters

send a killer squad to Amman to assassinate a Palestinian leader after the peace treaty with Jordan, why should they be any more prepared to respect the integrity of Abdullah's kingdom?

Indeed, one of the first meetings that the Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, held to discuss Abdullah's succession included Ephraim Halevy, head of the Mossad intelligence service. Israeli officials were quoted

as saying they would be behind the Crown Prince "in the short term".

And if Saddam Hussein was prepared to send his killer squads to knock off the Iraqi opposition in Amman, why should his son suddenly wish to improve relations with the Hashemite dynasty that gave political asylum to President Saddam's son-in-law? Could it be that the Iraqis have suddenly remembered King Hussein's former friendship with Saddam? Or are they anxious to ensure Saddam does not allow the United States to use Amman as a base to overthrow Saddam's regime?

Closer study of Mr Albright's tribute shows she hoped the transition to Abdullah was "one that does not cause problems". What sort of problems, one wonders, was she expecting? Resistance to his leadership from Palestinian Jordanians? Or resistance by Crown Prince Abdullah to pressure from Washington? It is one thing to be a "friend" of America – another to be obedient to the wishes of an American president. What if Abdullah shows as much independence of spirit as his father did in 1991, when he refused to support the West's military campaign against Iraq?

There is, in fact, a disturbing irony in the fact that while British aircraft fly the skies of Iraq's "no-fly" zones, a half-British prince is preparing to rule Iraq's closest Arab neighbour. The colonial history of Jordan can only be re-emphasised by Abdullah's succession. It is not just his English accent



King Hussein of Jordan

– after all, the British put his grandfather on the throne, propped up his father with military leaders (until King Hussein grew tired of them) and can now claim a half-share in the next king's blood-line. It's as well for the Palestinians of Jordan – perhaps 65 per cent of the country – that Abdullah's wife, Rania al-Yassine, is Palestinian.

Most Arabs, it should be said, have accepted the new crown prince's appointment, not with enthusiasm but with the kind of weariness born of knowing that they will never have a say in the appointment of their leaders (and only occasionally in their overthrow). America decided it should be Abdullah, "one of Lebanon's more cynical politicians" said yesterday. "Without Washington's approval, he would never have been appointed."

Of course it is true that American fighter-bombers are based – albeit with less publicity than in the Gulf – on at least one big Jordanian airstrip.

It is also true that before King Hussein's original journey to the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota last year, the Americans were trying to persuade him to allow the principal Iraqi opposition groups to use Amman as their headquarters for the future overthrow of Saddam Hussein.

At the time, there was much talk in Jordan of a move eastwards by the Jordanian army into the Iraqi desert, where the Jordanians (sponsored by the Americans) would set up a "sanctuary" to which Saddam's dissident legions would supposedly flock before setting out on a crusade to destroy the Iraqi tyrant.

Crown Prince Abdullah knows all about dissent – and how to suppress it. His special forces units were used to quell riots in several Jordanian towns last year. It is then the man the Americans might now choose to open up a corridor into Iraq?

No wonder *Babel* lavished praise on Abdullah's appointment. This is not the time for Saddam Hussein's son to offend the son of King Hussein.

And no wonder Mr Netanyahu – while claiming to pray for the "miracle" of King Hussein's return to health – described his country's peace with Jordan as "one of the cornerstones of Israel's national security". He knew when King Hussein's anger would break – Netanyahu was lucky to get his would-be assassins back from Jordan without a show-trial in Amman – but cannot guess when Abdullah's patience might become exhausted.

Model's body is found in swamp

BY THEODORA TONGAS
in Athens

THE GREEK boyfriend of a slain American model, 31-year-old Julie Scully, was arraigned on Thursday on charges of premeditated murder after he had led police to Scully's body, which was retrieved from a swamp near the northern city of Kavala.

George Skiadopoulos, 24, has confessed to strangling Scully on 8 January, then burning her remains before hacking off her head. He stuffed the body inside a suitcase and threw her head into the sea.

He had tried once before to kill her, but was stopped by his family, an investigator claimed yesterday. His claim came as medical examiners conducted an autopsy on the charred and headless remains of Scully.

"A violent suffocation, which at this time I cannot confirm was a strangulation," said coroner Filippos Koutsatis of the cause of death. He added some uncertainty remained about the strangulation because her neck was severed.

Private investigator John Kolivas, hired by Scully's family, alleged Skiadopoulos had also tried to choke her at the end of last year, but was stopped by his mother. It was the second reported choking incident involving Skiadopoulos and members of Scully's family while visiting Mansfield last summer. Skiadopoulos allegedly choked Scully's mother during an argument, and police charged him with simple assault. He was barred from contact with her and allowed to return to Greece.

Scully went to Greece with plans to marry Skiadopoulos, a petty officer aboard a cruise ship whom she met on a Caribbean trip while still married. But she had a change of heart and told her boyfriend she was returning home to New Jersey because she missed her three-year-old daughter.

According to police, that caused Skiadopoulos to fly into a rage and strangle Scully, known in New Jersey as a bikini-clad "Page Six Girl" for the tabloid *Trentonian*.

Skiadopoulos later concocted a story about how she disappeared in central Athens and began a search to find her. (AP)

New interest rates from 1st Feb 1999.

INVESTMENT INTEREST RATES FROM 1 FEBRUARY 1999

Interest payable annually

Dunfermline TESSA (Sixth Issue)	CURRENT Tax Free Interest***	FROM 1 FEB '99 Tax Free Interest***
£6,000	£9,000+	7.00%
£3,000	£8,999	6.85%
£100	£5,999	6.65%
	£2,999	6.15%
Monthly Saver	CURRENT Gross Rates**/ Gross AER***	FROM 1 FEB '99 Gross Rates**/ NET RATES**
(Including Fixed Bonus Interest of 4.15%)		
£20	£200 per month	6.95% 5.56%
Dunfermline Direct †	CURRENT Gross Rates**/ Gross AER***	FROM 1 FEB '99 Gross Rates**/ NET RATES**
£50,000	£50,000+	6.75% 5.40% 6.50% 5.20%
£25,000	£49,999	6.55% 5.24% 6.30% 5.04%
£10,000	£24,999	6.25% 5.00% 6.00% 4.80%
£5,000	£9,999	5.75% 4.60% 5.50% 4.40%
£2,500	£4,999	4.85% 3.88% 4.60% 3.68%
Premium Plus†† Issue 3 (Including Bonus Interest)	CURRENT Gross Rates**/ Gross AER***	FROM 1 FEB '99 Gross Rates**/ NET RATES**
£30,000	£100,000+	6.65% 5.32% 6.40% 5.12%
£25,000	£99,999	6.45% 5.16% 6.20% 4.96%
£10,000	£49,999	6.05% 4.84% 5.80% 4.64%
£5,000	£24,999	5.55% 4.44% 5.30% 4.24%
£2,500	£9,999	5.05% 4.04% 4.80% 3.84%
	£4,999	4.55% 3.64% 4.30% 3.44%
Premium Shares	CURRENT Gross Rates**/ Gross AER***	FROM 1 FEB '99 Gross Rates**/ NET RATES**
£50,000	£100,000	5.65% 4.52% 5.40% 4.32%
£25,000	£99,999	5.45% 4.36% 5.20% 4.16%
£10,000	£49,999	5.05% 4.04% 4.80% 3.84%
£5,000	£24,999	4.55% 3.64% 4.30% 3.44%
	£9,999	4.05% 3.24% 3.80% 3.04%
	£4,999	3.55% 2.84% 3.30% 2.64%
Dunfermline Gold	CURRENT Gross Rates**/ Gross AER***	FROM 1 FEB '99 Gross Rates**/ NET RATES**
£50,000	£50,000+	4.80% 3.84% 4.55% 3.64%
£25,000	£49,999	4.45% 3.56% 4.20% 3.36%
£10,000	£24,999	3.70% 2.96% 3.45% 2.76%
£5,000	£9,999	3.35% 2.68% 3.10% 2.48%
£2,500	£4,999	3.10% 2.48% 2.85% 2.28%
	£2,499	2.80% 2.24% 2.55% 2.04%
	£100	0.75% 0.60% 0.75% 0.60%
HeadStart Account (for young savers)	CURRENT Gross Rates**/ Gross AER***	FROM 1 FEB '99 Gross Rates**/ NET RATES**
£1 or more		3.25% 2.60% 3.00% 2.40%
PREMIUM PLUS	CURRENT Gross Rates**/ Gross AER***	FROM 1 FEB '99 Gross Rates**/ NET RATES**
Bonus interest of 1.00% gross p.a. paid if no more than one withdrawal of less than £10,000 is made each year and the balance of the account does not fall below £2,500.		

INTEREST PAYMENT

Where interest on the Premium Shares Account or Dunfermline Direct is payable other than annually the above rates are reduced by 0.50% gross. On Premium Plus Issue 3 the above rates are reduced by 0.25% gross.

Dunfermline TESSA (Third, Fourth and Fifth Issues - closed)	CURRENT Tax Free Interest***	FROM 1 FEB '99 Tax Free Interest***
£3,000+	6.85%	6.60%
£100	5.85%	5.60%
OTHER INVESTMENT ACCOUNTS	CURRENT Gross Rates**/ Gross AER***	FROM 1 FEB '99 Gross Rates**/ NET RATES**
Children's Bond	7.50%	6.00% 7.25% 5.80%
Portfolio Account	6.35%	5.08% 6.10% 4.88%
Priority ISA	5.50%	4.40% 5.25% 4.20%
	£7,000+	6.25% 5.00% 6.00% 4.80%
	£100-£6,999	6.80% 5.44% 6.50% 5.20%
Millennium Tracker Bond (Closed Issue)	CURRENT Gross Rates**/ Gross AER***	FROM 1 FEB '99 Gross Rates**/ NET RATES**
Bank Rate Plus (Closed Issue)	6.50%	5.20% 6.70% 6.25% 5.00% 6.43%

The rates of interest payable on Treasury's Deposits and Special Deposits for Charities and Exempt Pension Funds match Dunfermline Gold.

Dunfermline SecGold rates for individuals not ordinarily resident in the UK are available on application.

Details of interest rates for all other investment accounts (including other closed issues and fixed rates) are available from branch offices.

†Dunfermline Direct transactions are by post from the Society's Head Office.

TAX ARRANGEMENTS

*Gross interest means the rate of interest payable before the deduction of income tax at the rate specified by law ("the specified rate"). The current specified rate for basic rate tax payers is 20%. Please note you may be liable to pay tax at a higher rate depending on your tax position. **Net interest is the rate of interest which would be payable after deduction of income tax at the specified rate. ***AER stands for Annual Equivalent Rate and illustrates what the interest rate would be if interest was paid and added each year. ****Tax free interest is the rate of interest payable where interest is exempt from income tax. Where the tax deducted exceeds an investor's tax liability (if any) a claim may be made to the Inland Revenue for repayment of tax. For details and a registration form for payment of interest gross, please see Inland Revenue leaflet IR110. Current interest rates are available from our 24 hour rate line Tel: 01383 627780 and on our web site address below.

DUNFERMLINE
SCOTLAND'S BUILDING SOCIETY

Head Office: Caledonia House, Carnegie Avenue, Dunfermline KY11 8PJ. Tel: 01383 627777
www.dunfermline-fsc.co.uk

Envoy hands out home comfort as crises erupt

WEEK IN THE LIFE THE BRITISH CONSUL, DELHI

JOHN GREENGRASS, Britain's consul in Delhi, has not exported any elephants in the past seven days, nor lit any funeral pyres, but the week has had its usual share of unpredictable distractions.

Monday was meant to be a day of rest, but he came in to cover for a sick colleague. Before long, four different crises had erupted around him. First, his office was occupied by a sobbing woman whose marriage to an Indian had broken down, and who could not think of anywhere else to go for advice.

She was still there, still distraught, when an equally upset young man turned up. He said he had been lured into a grimy quarter of the city and poisoned with mind-altering drugs administered in a rum and coke. The plan, he believed, had been to knock him out then steal his possessions. But, dazed and staggering, he managed to escape in an autorickshaw taxi, and came straight round to the High Commission, still hallucinating. Mr Greengrass parked him in a neighbouring room.

BEFORE HE could deal with either of these cases, London was on the phone urging him to go at once to Chandigarh, the capital of Punjab and Haryana, north of Delhi: three young British backpackers had been arrested there over the holidays after apparently having a row with a policeman who demanded *baksheesh*. Although an investigating magistrate had suspended the officers who had carried out the arrest, one of the youths was still in jail on a drugs charge, and the parents had had a dreadful time worrying.

Mr Greengrass's challenge now was to persuade the police to drop the case so the boys could go home.

The conversation was interrupted by a knock on the door: it was the honorary consul for Lithuania who had come round for a quiet word in Mr Greengrass's ear about a ticklish visa problem. He was going to Britain for a visit, and he wanted to take his maid along. "Domestic servants," Mr Greengrass intimated, "are always a problem."

In the Indian context, a quiet word in the ear of a highly placed friend is exactly what is required to solve such problems. Britain, however, does not work in this way, at least not reliably so, and Mr Greengrass had to give his diplomatic acquaintance the gentlest possible brush-off. But before he could return his attention to the original problem – the desperate wife, divorcee (he has a list of solicitors) or marriage counselling? – the honorary consul and the hallucinating tourist had somehow got into a surrealistic argument in the corridor, and Mr Greengrass had to pull them apart before they smacked each other.

JOHN GREENGRASS wears a shirt of constabulary blue, has thinning hair and a bushy moustache and in every other respect is about as ordinary-looking an Englishman as you could hope to find east of Suez. Several times every month he sallies forth from the sanitised surroundings of the High Commission in Delhi to visit some of the most terrible places in Asia.

There are eight British prisoners in Tihar jail in Delhi, which is the biggest in India and, according to Mr Greengrass, "probably the worst."



John Greengrass: 'I love this job, it's brilliant'

Conditions in Tihar go from the dire to the unacceptable," he said. The men's cells are too small to contain a bed, and there is no other furniture either. The lavatory is a hole in the corner. The light, a bare bulb in the ceiling, is on day and night. The conditions for the two British women are even worse.

"The women's jail," Mr Greengrass explained, "is what used to be the maximum security wing of the men's jail." Now three women are squeezed into a cell built to house a single prisoner in solitary confinement. Fortunately, the prisoners are allowed to stay outside the cells all day and, when the whims of the guards permit, Mr Greengrass and his Indian assistant, Dinesh Kumar, come laden with comforts sent from home – blankets, hats, track suits, toiletries, peanut butter, cheese, books.

ALL THE prisoners hut one are inside for drug offences, all of them are on remand. Due to the *Bleak House*-like slugs

gishness of the Indian legal system, practically all cases drag on for years; and drug offences are non-bailable by law.

"The thing that hurts the prisoners more than anything else is the constant delays," Mr Greengrass said. "By law, there have to be hearings once every two weeks, but often for one reason or another, cases are adjourned over and over again. One guy has had no proper hearings for nearly five months."

But when the case finally comes to trial, prisoners can find that the nightmare ends quite fast. Arresting officers often make mistakes in procedure – one of Mr Greengrass's prisoners was arrested on the aircraft that was about to take him out of the country – and a good lawyer can often get the case thrown out in no time.

"All those whose trials have concluded have been acquitted," he said. "It seems to be a pattern. They spend two years in jail on remand, there's a quick trial, they are acquitted and deported."

MR GREENGRASS, who said: "I love this job, it's brilliant," has lit two funeral pyres down at the Yamuna river (one to the chanting of Hare Krishna devotees), scattered ashes in a Himalayan cemetery, facilitated the export of several elephants to Woburn Safari Park and helped Mark Shand to become the first person since India's independence to get a visa to visit India's troubled north-eastern border with China. But the blankets and peanut butter for the sorry inmates of Tihar Jail will probably be recorded as his most valuable acts of mercy.

PETER POPHAM

Business & City Editor, Jeremy Warner
News desk: 0171-293 2636 Fax: 0171-293 2098
E-mail: IndyBusiness@Independent.co.uk

BUSINESS

BT gets go-ahead to bid for Securicor's Cellnet stake

BRITISH TELECOM yesterday received the Government's go-ahead to take full control of Cellnet, the mobile phone operator in which Securicor has a minority stake, in a deal which could be worth up to £4bn.

The Department of Trade and Industry said it would lift a restriction preventing BT from increasing its 60 per cent holding in Cellnet, the country's second-largest mobile phone company. The DTI said it would clear the ownership ceiling, imposed 16 years ago to limit BT's dominance of the UK market, provided the phone company did not use its own cash to subsidise Cellnet.

In a second victory for BT, the DTI also announced that the fixed-line operator would be allowed to bid for the new "third generation" of hi-tech mobile phone licenses to be auctioned in the summer.

BT said it had "no immediate plans" to bid for Securicor's 40 per cent stake, but industry experts said the DTI's decision opened the way for a tough round of negotiations over the sale. Securicor said it was not in

talks with BT, but added that it was "prepared to consider" the sale of the stake "at a price that fully reflects the value of the investment to its shareholders".

City analysts predicted that the two companies would be locked in a lengthy battle over the price of the stake, which Securicor acquired for just £1m in 1993. They said the final price could range between £2.5bn and £4bn depending on which firm gained the upper hand.

James Ross at ABN Amro said Cellnet, which has 4 million subscribers and is second only to Vodafone in the fast-growing

UK mobile market, could be worth up to £13bn. That would make Securicor's stake worth around £4.8bn, although BT is expected to push the price down as it is the only credible buyer.

The lifting of the ownership ban sparked a rally in Securicor shares. The stock soared 12 per cent in early trade before ending 7 per cent up at £31.25p on expectations that the security firm would net a large profit on the sale. BT rose 3.5p to 980.5p.

Industry experts said that, although its 60 per cent stake gives BT management control of Cellnet, chief executive Sir Peter Bonfield would like to have full ownership of the business. They said he would be reviewing its options and would not take a decision until the DTI decided on the rules for the auction.

A decision by BT to bid on its own would leave Cellnet stranded as it would prevent the company from offering the new services through its network.

"Reading between the lines, it is pretty obvious that BT is saying: 'Unless you do a deal at a decent price, we'll do UMTS on our own,'" a leading telecoms analyst said.

BRIEFING

Russian failure hits BP Amoco

SHARES IN BP Amoco fell yesterday when Sidanko, a Russian oil producer in which BP has a 10 per cent share, said it faced bankruptcy proceedings. Sidanko, Russia's sixth-largest oil producer, is being sued by a creditor company, Beta-Eko, for unpaid debts. The company, which was hard hit by the slump in oil prices, has struggled to pay off its debts because of oil export restrictions imposed by the Russian government.

A spokesman for BP Amoco, which bought its stake to access the Kovykta gasfield in eastern Siberia, said the company was still viable in the long term. BP Amoco shares fell 14p on a rising market to close at 82.5p.

Marston denounces Wolves

MARSTON THOMPSON & Evershed, the regional brewer embroiled in a bitter bid battle with Wolverhampton & Dudley, issued its final defence document yesterday denouncing its rival's strategy as "inefficient" and "backward".

Marston, chaired by Michael Hurdle (pictured), has responded to Wolves' £288m bid with a £317m counter-offer. It urged its shareholders to "ignore W&D's empty rhetoric, look at the grim reality of their record." However, the group failed to increase its own offer, leaving shareholders to decide between the two strategies.

BMW denies chief is under threat

THE QUANDT family which controls German carmaker, BMW, yesterday denied reports that Bernd Pischetsrieder, chief executive of the company, was under pressure to quit because of the poor performance of Rover, its British subsidiary.

The reports surfaced as Mr Pischetsrieder explained in his annual letter to shareholders why Rover sustained losses last year estimated at up to DM1bn (£360m). He said that Rover's competitive position had deteriorated.

Help us, US asks Japan and Europe

BY JEREMY WARNER
in Davos, Switzerland

LAWRENCE SUMMERS, the US Deputy Treasury Secretary, yesterday strongly rejected claims that the US economy is riding for a fall, saying he believed growth momentum in the US would be continued, albeit with ups and downs.

Speaking at the World Economic Forum annual meeting in Davos, Switzerland, Mr Summers said the US government's strong fiscal surplus made America well prepared for any shocks to come.

However, he conceded that the strong US economy could not support the rest of the world indefinitely, and he insisted that growth in Europe would be a prerequisite for long-term health in the world economy.

"The world economy cannot fly for long on one healthy engine," he said. "It needs three healthy engines, including Europe and Japan."

The strength of the US economy was underscored by data showing that growth surged at the end of 1998. The economy grew at an annualised rate of 5.6 per cent in the fourth quarter, the fastest in two years and well above economists' forecasts.

At a conference dominated by questions about the sustainability of the US boom, Mr Summers' comments were echoed by Al Gore, the US Vice-President.

Mr Gore said the Clinton administration would press for debt relief for poor countries and repeated calls for Japan to boost growth to promote economic recovery at home and abroad. He added that in the administration's fiscal year 2000 budget proposal, to be released next week, President Clinton would push for significant debt relief for poor countries to help

ease the pressure of falling commodity prices and recession in some parts of the world.

"We need your help in dealing with this global economy," Mr Gore said, warning that the US could not continue to be "the importer of only resort".

Some estimates see the US trade deficit rising to more than \$300bn this year, the biggest ever.

Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, warned world leaders not to allow planned reform of the world's financial architecture so that it can act more effectively in crisis recognition and resolution fall by the wayside.

He urged the Group of Seven to act on the reforms at next month's summit in Germany so they could be put in place by the end of the year. Among the proposals are measures for greater transparency in emerging markets and a common code of standards.

Proposals from Stanley Fischer, deputy managing director of the International Monetary Fund, that the IMF be transformed into a lender of last resort to provide unlimited, though conditional, funds to crisis-hit countries, drew a cool response from the US.

Suggestions that the dollar, euro and yen be made to trade within bands to avoid damaging swings in value, also drew a cool response. Mr Summers said he agreed more stability in exchange rates was desirable, but he was sceptical that more coordinated statements from G7 leaders would help. He thought it dangerous "to use monetary policy to achieve an international objective".

Wim Duisenberg, president of the European Central Bank, said the objective of European monetary policy was price stability, not exchange rate targets.

Jeremy Warner, page 19

Rate cut pressure grows as euro slides on deflation fears

BY LEA PATERSON

THE EURO slumped to its weakest level against both the dollar and the pound yesterday on news of a further fall in European inflation.

Prices in the 11 eurozone countries rose by an annual rate of just 0.8 per cent in December, with inflation in some core economies close to zero, according to data from Eurostat. Economists said there was now a real risk of deflation - or falling prices - on the Continent.

After falling steadily against the major currencies over the past week, the euro fell to new lows of \$1.13 and 69.09p.

The figures coincided with renewed pressure from Europe's politicians for further

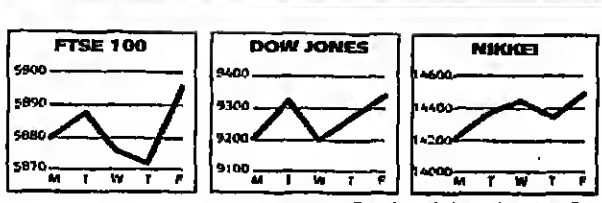
cuts in interest rates ahead of next week's meeting of the European Central Bank.

Speaking at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Heiner



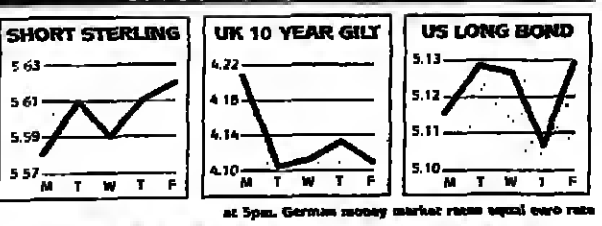
Eisuke Sakakibara, Japanese Deputy Finance Minister (left), and Lawrence Summers, US Deputy Treasury Secretary, enjoy a light-hearted moment at the World Economic Forum in Davos yesterday. Michel Euler/AP

STOCK MARKETS



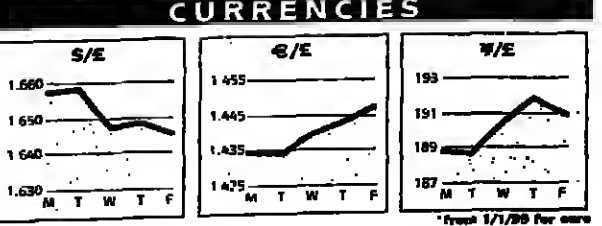
Index	Close	Change	Change (%)	52 wk high	52 wk low	YTD (%)
FTSE 100	5896.00	23.50	0.40	6195.60	4599.20	2.74
FTSE 250	5024.20	65.30	1.32	5970.90	4247.60	3.28
FTSE 350	2792.40	15.10	0.54	2989.10	2210.40	2.82
FTSE All Share	2695.54	14.80	0.55	2886.52	2143.53	2.87
FTSE SmallCap	2131.20	16.10	0.78	2793.80	1834.40	3.80
FTSE Fledgling	1186.20	4.70	0.40	1517.10	1046.20	4.54
FTSE AIM	834.20	4.00	0.48	1126.90	761.30	1.19
FTSE Europe 100	3786.59	16.37	0.39	3079.27	2018.15	2.13
FTSE Europe 300	1214.89	7.11	0.59	1332.07	880.63	1.99
Dow Jones	9343.38	56.64	0.61	9647.96	7400.30	1.64
Nikkei	14429.25	156.93	1.09	17352.35	12787.90	1.00
Hank Seng	9506.99	145.94	1.56	11926.16	6544.79	3.70
Dax	3159.96	69.55	2.25	3217.83	2893.71	1.87
S&P 500	1272.62	6.80	0.54	1278.05	923.32	1.25
Nasdaq	2494.86	16.90	0.68	2472.47	1357.09	0.27
Tokyo 300	6690.90	22.25	0.33	7837.70	5320.90	1.59
Brazil Bovespa	9512.66	528.30	6.41	12399.14	4575.69	7.39
Belgium Bel20	3411.59	5.68	0.17	3713.21	2568.46	2.08
Amsterdam Eux	532.09	-6.89	-1.28	600.65	366.58	1.85
France CAC 40	4251.80	52.13	1.24	4404.94	2881.21	1.90
Milan MIB30	36672.00	226.90	0.62	39170.00	24175.00	1.18
Madrid Iboex 35	5878.09	46.69	0.79	10889.89	4649.90	1.86
Hong Kong	5189.01	-4.77	-0.09	5381.70	3732.57	1.46
S Korea Comp	571.43	-0.04	-0.01	651.95	277.37	1.04
Australia ASX	2893.80	16.60	0.58	2902.90	2386.70	3.17

INTEREST RATES



Index	3 month	6 month	1 year	10 year	30 year	Long bond	Yr. Chg.
UK	5.82	-1.75	5.50	-2.00	4.11	-1.96	4.17
US	4.97	-0.88	5.06	-0.66	4.70	0.86	5.13
Japan	0.48	-0.30	0.48	-0.26	2.07	0.01	3.07
Germany	3.07	-0.47	3.98	-0.82	3.64	-1.44	4.59

CURRENCIES



POUND

Index	at Spot	Change	Yr. Ago
Dollar	1.6681	-0.0091	1.6404
Euro	1.4472	-0.0091	1.4079
Yen	180.99	-0.64	206.57
E index	100.80	+0.20	105.00

DOLLAR

Index	at Spot	Change	Yr. Ago
Sterling	0.6075	+0.030	0.6096
Euro	1.1368	-0.21c	1.1865
Yen	116.08	-0.47	125.85
\$ index	105.60	+0.00	109.00

OTHER INDICATORS

Index	at Spot	Change	Yr. Ago
Brent Oil (\$)	11.09	-0.03	16.23
Gold (\$)	286.25	3.00	302.38
Silver (\$)	5.24	0.15	6.16

TOURIST RATES

Index	at Spot	Change	Yr. Ago
Australia (\$)	2.5106		
Austria (schillings)	19.21		
Belgium (francs)	56.42		
Canada (\$)	2.4098		
Cyprus (pounds)	0.8094		
Denmark (krone)	10.48		
Finland (markka)	8.3785		
France (francs)	9.1759		
Germany (marks)	2.4500		
Greece (drachma)	12.28		
Hong Kong (\$)	1.0994		
India (rupees)	62.73		
Israel (shekels)	6.2280		
Italy (lira)	27.19		
Japan (yen)	185.95		
Malaysia (ringgits)	5.9908		
Malta (lira)	0.6075		

Rival bids on the cards as Electra rejects 3i's offer

3i YESTERDAY said its 700p-a-share takeover offer for Electra Investment Trust, aimed at forming a £5bn venture capital company, had been rebuffed amid reports that other parties had expressed an interest in placing rival bids.

The rejection came at the end of three weeks of boardroom haggling over the value of Electra's assets and its 50 per cent

Following yesterday's rejection, 3i executives met to consider whether to raise the offer, which values Electra at £1.235m. 3i has so far hinted that this represents a premium to the value of Electra's assets.

Independent analysts have put the net asset value of Electra at 685.5p a share. At yesterday's close of 682.5p, that puts the shares at a slight premium to net asset value.

Electra says its own calculations value its assets at well above 700p a share. The two also differ on Electra's claim that its stake in Electra Fleming is worth £30m, a figure built into the asset calculation. The figure includes a goodwill element of more than £25m.

As traders anticipated a raised offer or an alternative

bid, shares in Electra fell just 1.9 per cent yesterday, still 20 per cent higher than their value before the bid was disclosed.

Observers yesterday said Electra was "playing a risky game" because of the potential shareholder anger if the deal fails to materialise. Before news of the talks, shares in the trust were trading at a 20 per cent discount to asset value.

A source close to Electra said the trust would restructure in any event. "I think it is generally accepted at Electra that life is never going to be the same again. It probably doesn't have a very long shelf life. If it isn't 3i, it's going to be someone else. The ball's in their court".

Speculation yesterday centred on GE Capital, the US financial services giant.

AROUND THE WORLD'S MARKETS

LONDON

A VOLATILE session ended with Footsie sporting a 23.5 points gain at 5,896. Much of the action was among smaller cap shares with the mid cap index climbing to its highest level since August.

Securicor led the blue chips with a 42.5p surge to 631.5p. The Government's decision to give BT more flexibility over its mobile phone operations produced speculation it would buy Securicor's 40 per cent Cellnet stake to take full control.

Derek Pain, page 18

NEW YORK

UNEXPECTEDLY STRONG growth figures boosted stocks in opening trade, but a sharp bout of selling, which one trader said fitted the pattern of computer-generated selling, erased the gains and sent the Dow skidding to losses of more than 50 points. It later rebounded, climbing 0.9 per cent to 9363.7.

The U.S. Commerce Department said GDP in the fourth quarter rose 5.6 per cent on an annualised basis, sharply beating the Wall Street consensus.

TOKYO

A WEAKENING yen and overnight gains on Wall Street helped the benchmark Nikkei 225 index end up 1 per cent at 14,499.

Fuji Bank's decision on Thursday to make Yasuda Trust & Banking its subsidiary, and news that Daiwa Securities was mulling launching pension plans with financial firms in the Sumitomo and Mitsubishi groups, raised hopes that Japan's ailing financial system was heading towards stability. Mitsubishi Motors rose 5 per cent on alliance speculation.

HONG KONG

STOCKS REBOUNDED after Thursday's sell-off, with the Hang Seng ending up 1.56 per cent at 9,506, but traders warned it could come under pressure next week as the reporting season begins. Activity in index futures suggested the index would either fall below 9,000 or breach 10,000 in February.

HSBC led the rise, climbing 2.39 per cent. Developer Sun Hung Kai climbed 2.8 per cent on rumours it was talking with Disney about a theme park.

SAO PAULO

THE EMBATTLED real tumbled to new lows ahead of crunch meetings between the government and IMF officials, who arrive in Brazil this weekend. The real fell for the seventh successive day, and breached the psychologically important barrier of 2 reals to the dollar to hit a low of 2.105.

The Bovespa index rose 6.9 per cent to 8537.7 in afternoon as investors bought shares that were cheap in dollar terms. The 8 per cent drop in the real came despite the central bank hiking interbank rates.

[illegible]

Good reasons for US to be cheerful

IN RECENT YEARS there has been a consistent theme running like a thread through the annual meetings of the World Economic Forum. Amid the analysis of European Monetary Union, globalisation, the advance of the Internet into all areas of business and the emerging markets crisis, there has also been a growing air of American triumphalism.

And with good reason. After seven years of uninterrupted low inflation, the US economy is still booming. Its technology leads the world, its entrepreneurs have galvanised business across the globe with their invention and energy, unemployment is at a record low and Americans as a whole are now more wealthy than ever.

However, this time round there is a quite tangible change of mood. Plainly, the Americans themselves are as gung ho as ever. But virtually everyone else I have talked to here this year, with few exceptions, thinks the American economy stands at an exceptionally difficult and dangerous crossroads. Few are prepared to defend US stock price valuations at their present levels, and many believe Wall Street has become a financial bubble comparable in size and scope to

JEREMY WARNER



IN DAVOS, SWITZERLAND

that which engulfed Japan in the late 1980s. Even among the most optimistic, there is real fear.

It is hard to argue against these concerns. They are well founded. The US has a huge and growing trade deficit. In a world beset by recession and sluggish growth, the US economy has become the only dynamo of any significance. To achieve this, American consumers have been spending like there is no tomorrow. In so doing, they have been supporting the rest of the world. Without the US, the position

in Japan, the rest of Asia and Brazil - already bad enough - would be even worse.

This spending binge has been supported by a buoyant stock market, which has made Americans feel much wealthier than they perhaps really are. However, the money to support such spending has to come from somewhere. The truth of the matter is that it is being financed by ever higher borrowing, much of it from the rest of the world.

For how much longer can this merry-go-round be sustained? Not much longer, seems to be the general view here, although naturally you don't hear it from American policy makers. Were it not for the deflationary recession in parts of the rest of the world, US interest rates would already be rising steeply to choke off the inflationary effects of the boom, many believe.

As it is, Alan Greenspan is risking his reputation as he works out his remaining years as chairman of the Federal Reserve by keeping an ultimately doomed boom alive. The longer it goes on, the more severe and damaging will be the fallout when it ends, it is argued.

So far, however, nothing has managed to puncture the bubble. The Russian meltdown tried its



damnedest, and for a while it looked as if the near collapse of Long-Term Capital Management might deliver the goods. Even Brazil has so far failed to shake confidence on Wall Street fundamentally. Stock prices have defied the doomsters. By rights, the dollar too ought to be falling by an order of magnitude to compensate for the trade deficit. It has not.

So is this going to be the year when things go pear-shaped? That's what many are saying here. What puzzles me, however, is that if so many professional pundits and economists think Wall Street is heading for a serious fall, why has it not already done so?

One possible reason is that private investors in the US have been taught by experience that it pays to buy on the dips. Every time there is a setback they wake back in, believing that bargains like these

won't be on offer for long. But it is also because the Federal Reserve has acted to buoy their confidence by cutting interest rates, and when LTCM threatened general systemic damage to financial markets, organising a rescue.

According to the bears - and many supposed experts here seem to be of that persuasion - this is only delaying the final reckoning. I'm not convinced by any of this, plausible though it seems. Just think back to the way the world looked from Davos this time last year. Who then would have predicted that industrial production in South Korea would within 12 months be virtually back to pre-crisis levels? How many people then would have expected monetary union in Europe to get off to an entirely glitch-free start? Who would have predicted that the American boom would continue unabated into the final quarter of the year? And finally, how many forecasters outside the US would have had the Dow still riding high at 9,300?

On the other side of the coin, of course, hardly anyone would have thought the scale of the disintegration in Russia possible. Most of us would have expected Japan to be in slightly better shape by now

than it is. Although many predicted a crash, few could have foreseen the degree of strain the world financial system was subjected to, or the volatility we now accept as a way of life.

Even so, I think many of those who observe events from outside the US are missing something here. There is no rule of economics that says business cycles must have only a certain finite length. In recent history, business cycles have not so much died of old age as been murdered by the anti-inflationary policies of the Federal Reserve. Outside stock prices, there is very little sign of inflationary pressure, either in the US or elsewhere in the world. Meanwhile, the Federal government has during the good years recharged its fiscal cannon in a way that gives unprecedented scope for reflationary policy if and when the time demands it.

There is something else that tends to be forgotten in constantly comparing Wall Street now to the Tokyo market of a decade ago. The US government has no target for the stock market, and other than the general prosperity of its people, it has no interest in maintaining it at inflated levels. On the whole, it doesn't engage in market manipu-

lation, as the government did in Japan, and there is no systemic reason why the market needs to be kept high. By contrast with Japan, American business and markets are highly transparent, and the US government rightly attempts to promote private sector enterprise by simply not getting in the way.

The upshot is that there has rarely been a better time to be in business in the US, nor has the opportunity for new business development ever been as great. Whole industries and markets are being radically reordered by the electronic revolution. For the first time companies and individuals can, through the Internet, have a global presence without the need for a global footprint: without the huge paraphernalia of worldwide distribution and marketing which has traditionally maintained global organisations.

American entrepreneurs and wealth creators have seized the opportunity presented by these changes as no others. This is why Wall Street is high. Is it too high? Almost certainly. Will it burst any time soon? Probably not. Even if it does, will the US economy keep up the high-growth momentum of recent years? Yes, of course it will.

IN BRIEF

Hopes raised for Vaux buyout

VAUX, the Sunderland pub group planning to sell its two breweries and 350 tenanted pubs to concentrate on Swallow hotels, yesterday agreed to grant a four-week exclusivity deal to a management buyout team led by Frank Nicholson, the younger brother of Vaux's chairman Sir Paul Nicholson. It raises hopes that the management team - which is committed to keeping open both the Sunderland brewery and the Ward's brewery in Sheffield - will clinch the deal, which could be worth over £80m. Vaux profits in the first 16 weeks of the current year are almost 5 per cent ahead of last year but below target, the AGM was told.

Diageo sells

DIAGEO'S Pillsbury unit is selling six non-strategic brands to US company B&G Foods for \$192m, including Underwood meat spreads, B&M baked beans and Joan of Arc canned beans. A buyer is still being sought for Pet Evaporated Milk, which was put up for sale at the same time last July.

Boots in Holland

BOOTS the Chemists is to spend £49m opening a further 45 stores in Holland. Boots has been testing five healthy and beauty stores in Holland for 18 months. Boots also plans to extend its chain of stores in Thailand from 19 to 50 by the end of this year and move into Japan later this year.

Rank job

RANK GROUP, the struggling Butlins-to-bingo leisure company, has found a replacement for Andrew Teare, who resigned as chief executive three months ago. Mike Smith, chief executive of Ladbrokes' betting and gaming division, will take up the position in April. Mr Smith, 52, has been at Ladbrokes since 1994. Rank shares fell 7.5p to 200p.

Nokia profits up

PRE-TAX profits at Nokia surged 74 per cent last year, to 14.6bn markka (\$2.8bn), while sales jumped a record 51 per cent to 79.2bn markka - leaving it in position to become the world's number one mobile phone maker, the Finnish group said yesterday. Nokia's results outstripped those of its two key rivals - Motorola, whose 1998 sales eased, and Ericsson, which posted 10 per cent sales growth on Thursday.



The Lucas wiring factory at Ystradgynlais in the Swansea Valley yesterday, where 750 jobs are to be axed. LucasVariety denied that the closure was connected to the TRW takeover. David Roberts/Dragon

City expects Snell to trump £4bn Lucas bid

BY FRANCESCO GUERRERA

THE CITY is expecting the chief executive of the US engineering group Federal-Mogul, Dick Snell, one of the most ambitious figures in corporate America, to trump the £4bn agreed takeover of LucasVariety by its US rival TRW with an increased offer next week.

Industry analysts believe that Mr Snell, famous for his audacious and highly-leveraged bids, will increase Federal-Mogul's tentative £3.6bn offer for the car parts and aerospace group to up £4.2bn, triggering a bitter bid war for Lucas.

Speculation of a clash between the two US engineering giants came as Lucas announced the closure of two plants in Swansea and Cincinnati with the loss of over 1,000 jobs.

In another blow to Lucas, the company's chief executive, Victor Rice, came under fire from a union leader who warned that his plans for an American deal could put the company's £4bn pension fund at risk.



Dick Snell: Famed for his audacious takeover bids

However, financial experts were focused on Mr Snell's next move. They predicted that the Federal-Mogul boss, who has promised to achieve his trumpeted "Big Hairy Audacious Goal (BHAG)" of \$10bn sales by 2002, would raise its failed 280p cash-and-share bid to around 310p per share.

The move would force TRW - one of the biggest car parts manufacturers in the US - to

raise its 280p cash offer. "Dick Snell is serious about Lucas. I think he'll come back with a 300p to 310p offer," said Mark Little, engineering analyst at BT Alex Brown.

Mr Little added that Mr Snell would probably increase the cash element of the offer in a bid to appease Lucas's UK shareholders who do not want to hold US shares.

Other analysts noted that a bold bid would be in line with Mr Snell's past strategy. Since joining from rival engineer Tenneco in 1996, the 56-year-old has spent over \$5bn on takeovers, growing Federal-Mogul from a medium-sized player into an industry giant with expected 1998 sales of \$7bn and 56,000 employees worldwide.

Two years ago Mr Snell stunned the UK engineering sector when he bought the brake-pads maker T&N for £1.5bn, when Federal Mogul was valued at just \$1bn. Since then he has bought the car parts unit of the US engineer, Cooper Industries, for £1.9bn and Fel-Pro - a gasket maker - for about \$720m.

Almost all the purchases included Federal-Mogul's highly-rated paper and a high element of debt, provided by Mr Snell's many backers on Wall Street. The purchase of Lucas, which has a £4bn turnover, would enable Mr Snell to achieve his "BHAG" well before time.

LucasVariety yesterday repeated that the TRW merger would give rise to greater synergies than a deal with Federal-Mogul.

The company denied that the closure of its car wiring plant in Ystradgynlais, near Swansea - where more than 700 people would lose their jobs - and of a brake factory in Cincinnati were linked to the TRW takeover. A spokesman said the decision had been taken because of difficult conditions in the two markets.

The spokesman said that allegations by Roger Lyons, the general secretary of the white-collar MSF union, that the company's pension fund could be destroyed if Lucas were broken up by a US buyer, were unfounded.

LANGLEY & JOHNSON

has limped back to market; the shares fell 0.25p to 2.5p. The former construction group intends to sell its remaining trading asset, a small Gloucester leasing operation.

It is looking for a reverse takeover and has held abortive talks with a leisure group. Three years ago shares of the loss-making group topped 50p.

the market has put on their companies, have mounted management buyouts. They believe they know their companies - and their value - better than the market and have been prepared, by borrowing and enlisting the help of venture capitalists, to let their money do the talking. Other undercard companies have used share buybacks to illustrate the belief that the market has it wrong.

Although such corporate activity has been going on for a long while, it is only this year, when the smaller fry have outperformed blue chips, that the message seems to have filtered through to investors.

There are even signs that some institutional investors, which have ignored the undercard, are relenting and starting to pick up stock.

Hard pressed sports retailer, JJB Sports, led the small-cap march. The shares jumped 52.5p to 362.5p on the

SECOND AND third-line shares

are outplaying their Footsie betters. As blue chips experienced yet another volatile session, the undercard continued to recover from the depths of despair experienced last year.

The mid cap index jumped 65.3 points to 5,024.2, the first time it has topped 5,000 since August. And the small cap rose 16.1 points to 2,131.2.

Growing takeover activity is a major influence. Bids are flowing with almost monotonous regularity, exposing the hidden value of many smaller companies.

Chemical group Albright & Wilson is the latest to admit it has attracted predatory attention. The shares jumped 23p to 99.5p, their highest since August, after the company said it had received "a number of tentative approaches", but they did not include any proposals from the group's management.

In many instances managers, depressed by the value

MARKET REPORT



DEREK PAIN

belief that the worst is over and the shares can start to head back towards their 819.5p peak.

Engineers, spurred by the rush of takeover activity, moved ahead with Bodycote up 62.5p to 850p and Senior Engineering, which met analysts on Thursday, 6p to 121.5p. CSFB reckon it is worth 140p a share.

Takeover speculation lifted Brands Hatch, the motor racing group, 8p to 173.5p and Regent Inns 16.5p to 169p. Hepworth, the building materials group, rose 9p to 148.5p with HSBC suggesting the shares were 25 per cent undervalued.

Footsie ended 23.5 points higher at 5,896. It swung between a 69.2 gain and a 40.5 fall, with New York's behaviour the dominating influence in the afternoon. Trading was heavy, with turnover above 1.1 billion shares.

Securicor was the most wanted Footsie constituent, gaining 42.5p to 631.25p as the market prepared for BT to ring the changes at the Cellnet mobile phone group. BT, with 60 per cent of Cellnet, has been anxious to buy Securicor's 40 per cent interest but has been thwarted by Westminster.

Now the Department of Trade & Industry has given BT more flexibility to compete in the mobile phone market. It is to be allowed to bid in the next licensing round, and, if it

desires, buy full control of Cellnet. BT aimed 3.5p to 930.5p.

Mike Smith was given a muted reception as chief executive of struggling Rank Leisure group; the shares fell 7.5p to 200p.

WPP, the advertising group, rose 27p to 458.5p on the theory that it had been left behind in the recent media surge.

Diageo's \$192m food sale produced a 35p gain to 672p. Banks were higher, with Barclays up 61p to 1,360p.

ICI - year's results next week - put on 18p to 543p and BAA, also reporting next week, added 20.5p to 723p. Independent Energy, the electricity and gas supplier, flared 40p to 717.5p, a peak; interim results are next week.

Racal Electronic, meeting institutions next week, rose 4.5p to 387p. Premier Farnell added a further 11p to 202p on its restructuring plans.

Poor trading reports had a predictable impact. Allders,

STANDFORD ROOK, the little biotech company, jumped 24p to 166.5p, its highest for more than a year. Talk of a forthcoming link with a major pharmaceuticals group with an asthma treatment was behind the surge.

Two years ago the shares were riding at 635p on the group's TB development. As hopes faded they plunged to a 61.5p low.

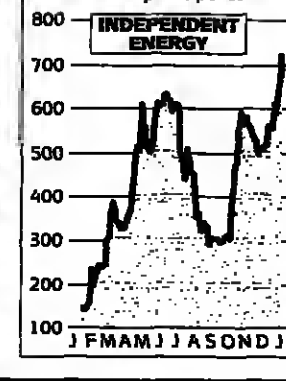
with festive sales down, fell 4.5p to 108.5p. Building materials group Lillleshall, forecasting a 2.7m loss, gave up 20.5p to 47.5p, and talk of a "less buoyant" market left Partridge Fine Arts 11.5p off at 62.5p. Others piling on the gloom were Banner Chemical, off 2.5p at 8.5p, and TGI, down 7p at 33p.

Builders were helped by Bryant's figures on Thursday and upbeat comments from Ward. Persimmon rose 14p higher to 182p and Bellway 10p to 265.5p. Ward was 3.5p higher at 31.5p.

Langsons Foods, planning to raise cash through a share placing, was unchanged at 1.5p. Some Internet shares were given a further upwards whirl. Freepages, linking up with Frettech, put on 4.5p to 32.5p, and Internet Technology gained 4p to 168p.

SEAQ VOLUME: 1.1 billion
SEAQ TRADES: 74,171

SHARE SPOTLIGHT



Lillleshall plunges on bank covenant breach

BY CLIFFORD GERMAN

SHARES IN Lillleshall, the Berkshire-based provider of industrial services, plunged from 68p to 47.5p yesterday after the company announced it was in breach of its banking covenants with Lloyds Bank.

The company warned that after writing down the value of its loss-making plastic housewares business it does not have the money to redeem £3.3m in

and workwear made operating profits of £4.5m in the year just ended. The rest of the building products division, now operating mainly in France, made a satisfactory profit. But losses at the plastic housewares business continue to worsen as retailers demand lower prices.

Some businesses have been sold in the past six months, including Ideal Williams, a

maker of doors and windows, and St Helens Glass, which was sold last month to the management for £1.5m. Together they made operating losses of £3.5m for the year and incurred an operating exceptional charge of £700,000. After other exceptional charges of £17.3m, including a £5m write-down of the plastic housewares business which triggered the

breach of covenant, a loss of around £30m is likely and no final dividend will be paid.

The new chief executive, Roger Fearnough, said in September that Lillleshall would focus on industrial services and dispose of the manufacturing divisions, including building products and plastic housewares. This has now become more urgent.

COMPANY RESULTS

Name	Turnover (£)	Pre-tax (£)	EPS	Dividend	Pay day	X-avg
TRW (I)	3,340m (+)	0.649m (+)	0.48p (+)	-	-	-
Avon (I)	1,688m (+)	-0.427m (-1.74m)	-0.44p (-0.17p)	-	-	-
South Industrial Group (I)	12,198m (+0.18m)	0.379m (+0.058m)	3.35p (+0.70p)	-	-	-
Cleaving Group (SP)	74.75m (+4.85m)	1.25m (+4.02m)	11.35p (+3.70p)	5.0p (+0.0p)	13.04.99	22.03.99
Chen Hovers (I)	0.045m (+0.03m)	0.006m (+0.012m)	0.71p (+0.03p)	-	-	-
Fal Group Industries (I)	3.84m (+2m)	-0.853m (-7.81m)	-0.80p (-0.73p)	-	-	-
Hampton Trust (I)	8.72m (+1.72m)	-0.603m (-0.552m)	-0.69p (-0.29p)	-	-	-
Inter Working Group (I)	0.514m (+0.257m)	-0.835m (-0.827m)	-2.80p (-1.85p)	-	-	-
Langdon Foods (I)	1.78m (+2.52m)	-0.011m (-0.485m)	0.004p (-0.45p)	-	-	-
The Old Mill Co. (I)	4.78m (+2.74m)	0.214m (+0.125m)	1.20p (+1.40p)	-	-	-
Partridge Fine Arts (I)	18.48m (+2.12m)	2.28m (+0.57m)	7.33p (+1.88p)	3.25p (+0.0p)	22.04.99	15.03.99
Richards (I)	23.88m (+29.5m)	-3.31m (-1.88m)	-14.12p (-7.83p)	-	-	-
Southwest Venetia (I)	12.98m (+13.82m)	1.30m (+1.39m)	4.9p (+4.7p)	-	-	-
Ward Holdings (I)	27.7m (+30.5m)	*2.4m (+1.3m)	*4.22p (+0.95p)	1.5p (+0.0p)	31.03.99	22.02.99

(I) - Final (F) - Interim (Q) - Quarterly (SP) - Split Period (N) - Nine Months * Before Exceptions

This information is listed by sector, not by company, in order to allow investors to define the comparative performance of their funds relative to others.

Care is taken to ensure that the information provided by International and Standard & Poor's Mutual Fund Intelligence is independent, correct, timely, and free of any attempt to assign responsibility for errors. Misstatements or omissions are not the responsibility of either.

The first two prevailing funds in each sector are highlighted in bold. All funds are as of the end of the year. Fund size is based on the first day of the period. Fund size was most recently recorded in X-Box data on an offer to the public. The fund size was not recorded in X-Box data. The fund size of \$100 is the first fund that is listed. Fund size is based on the first fund that is listed.

1. Does a fund usually trade through a Manager's FEP scheme.

STANDARD & POOR'S
Mutual Fund
Bloomberg
www.bloomberg.com

SPORT

Rugby Union: Ulster's revitalised No 15 is in prime form for today's European Cup final against Colomiers in Dublin

Mason back to playing for kicks

IT SEEMS slightly absurd to talk about the loneliness of the long distance goal-kicker when he can count on the unconditional support of 40,000 deafeningly vocal Ulstermen, but Simon Mason is likely to discover more about naked solitude than he ever wanted to know in the teeming, steaming pressure-pit of Lansdowne Road this afternoon. Precisely a year ago, Christophe Lamaison went from crack shot to crackpot during the course of a European Cup final: by the end, he could not have hit the Arc de Triomphe with a bag of onions. If it can happen to the William Tell of Brive, it can happen to anyone.

Quite rightly, Mason will take an enormous degree of mental and emotional sustenance from the fact that it did not happen to him across the horder in Belfast three weeks ago. Confronted with a series of devilish kicks at delicate psychological moments during the semi-final with Stade Français at Ravenhill, his marksmanship from distance was well nigh flawless. But, by God, he felt the dead weight of expectation in every fibre of his being.

"That," he admitted this week, "was a nervy old afternoon."

"People often say that the longer kicks are the easy ones because there is no assumption that you'll stick them over, but it really depends on the circumstances of the game. The long penalties against Stade Français were real pressure shots because they kept us out of range of Diego Dominguez and his right boot. A six- or seven-point lead is so much easier to defend than a two- or three-point advantage and it meant that Dominguez had to pull some magic out of the hat rather than just make his goals. As it turned out, the magic wasn't there. It pleases me no end to think my

BY CHRIS HEWETT

Sea. "You could call it a victory for my rugby over my bank balance; unlike a number of other Irish-qualified players who left the Premiership for the provinces last summer, I didn't have an international contract to act as a financial bedrock. But I figured that if I could establish myself in the Ulster side and perhaps break back into the national squad with a World Cup on the horizon, the sacrifices would be worthwhile. It was a question of pride, as much as anything."

Vindication has duly arrived in the satisfying shape of 126 European Cup points in eight outings, although Warren Gatland, the Ireland coach, remains unconvinced of Mason's latent international class; indeed, the 25-year-old from Birkenhead, the qualifies for the Cocksies and Mussels brigade through three Irish grandparents) has yet to win a starting place in his country's A team. Let alone threaten to relieve the outstanding Conor O'Shea, a personal friend, of the No 15 Test shirt. Nothing less than a flawless display against Colomiers will drive Gatland into rethinking mode.

As it happens, Mason knows more about these particular French opponents than the rest of Ulster's merry band of brothers put together. "I came across them twice with Richmond in last season's European Shield and we copped a hiding both times. They're an excellent side, really very accomplished. They have a big physical presence up front, lots of skill out wide and one or two of their players, Jean-Luc Sadoury especially, are world class. I've heard the old clichés, all that stuff about the French not travelling well and how Colomiers will hate playing at a Lansdowne Road full of hollering Ulstermen. I seem to remember people saying the same things about Brive just before they hammered Leicester in the 1997 final.

"There aren't any lines you can sensibly draw in advance of a game of this magnitude. It's a final, isn't it? That's as much as you can say. There are no favourites, no underdogs. The team that handles the nerves and copes with the uniqueness of it all will lift the trophy. Those of us fortunate enough to have played international rugby will be able to draw on the experience and help those who haven't to avoid the pitfalls. It's easy to get carried away in this sort of atmosphere, as some of the Leicester guys discovered two years ago. Above all, we need to stay calm and stay together."

Whatever happens this afternoon, Mason intends to stay in Belfast; happily, an extension to his one-year contract, up for renewal at the end of the season, is likely to be agreed sooner rather than later. "It's been pure enjoyment, playing here," he said. "The side is so close-knit and so mutually supportive that it was easy to settle in and find my feet again after the disappointment at Richmond. In fact, I haven't had a run of form like this since my Orrell days and I'm treasuring every second of it."

"But while we're having a lot of fun, we're also very serious about our rugby. We're not just happy to be in the final. We've looked at the tape of the Stade Français game over and over again and we've said to ourselves: 'Yes, we played out of our skins, but we can still improve technically. We can scrummage better, we can spruce up our restarts, we can cut out these errors.' By taking a professional approach and setting the right standards, we can strike a balance between lapping up all the attention and actually doing the job."

"Irish sides have this reputation of flatter to deceive, but by beating Toulouse and Stade Français we've proved we can win the tight ones. Will we win this one? Who knows? No matter how meticulously you prepare, a cup final is bound to be a swirl of passion and emotion. That is what makes the experience so special. Only one thing is certain. Everyone lucky enough to be involved will take their memories of this occasion to their graves."



Simon Mason stays relaxed in training at Ravenhill this week. "The team that handles the nerves will lift the trophy," says the Ulster full-back Pacemaker

ULSTER'S ROUTE TO THE FINAL

GROUP MATCHES
Ulster 38 Edinburgh Reivers 38
(Mason: 3 con, 4 pen, 1 try, 23pts)
Toulouse 39 Ulster 3
(Mason: 1 pen, 3pts)
Ebbw Vale 28 Ulster 61
(Mason: 4 con, 1 try, 13pts)
Ulster 29 Toulouse 24
(Mason: 1 con, 4 pen, 1 try, 19pts)
Ulster 43 Ebbw Vale 18
(Mason: 7 con, 4 pen, 26pts)
Edinburgh Reivers 21 Ulster 23
(Mason: 3 con, 3 pen, 13pts)
QUARTER-FINAL
Ulster 15 Toulouse 13
(Mason: 3 con, 5pts)
SEMI-FINAL
Ulster 33 Stade Français 27
(Mason: 1 con, 5 pen, 1 drop, 20pts)
Mason's total: 126 points

kicks helped push him into a corner."

This time last year, the thrice-capped Irish full-back was in a corner of his own. Richmond, the ambitious Allied Dunbar Premiership club he had joined from Orrell in 1996, were paying him - hand-somely, as a matter of fact - but not playing him. They preferred Matt Pini, the former World Cup Wallaby, as their last line of defence, even though Mason had contributed 321 points to their promotion drive the previous season.

"I was banging my head against a brick wall at Richmond and to be honest with you, rejection felt like a kick in the teeth. It was something I'd never experienced; I'd gone through the system, done well in every age group and at every level and suddenly, I found myself pushed to one side. I went to Blackheath on loan and removed some of the rust from my system, but I knew my whole career was in the balance. Even when Ulster got in touch and asked me to consider moving to Ravenhill, it was a hell of a decision to have to make. I knew the move would hit me in the pocket and, more importantly, my then-fiancee had just qualified as a vet and been offered a job in London. Understandably, Belfast was not one of her preferred options."

If Mason drew the line at praying for guidance, he certainly went through the agonies before abandoning a settled London lifestyle and booking his passage across the Irish

Irish prepared for miracles

GERRY ADAMS and David Trimble are expected to share the same VIP box overlooking the Lansdowne Road bespirt in Dublin this afternoon and in a perfect world, Ulster would win the European Cup with the last kick of the game and send the two men heading arm in arm towards Kitty O'Shea's for 50 pints of you know what and a table-thumping chorus of "Get 'Em Down, You Zulu Warrior". Pie in the sky? Perhaps. But then, who gave the white-shirted no-hopers from Ravenhill an earthly of making the final? Maybe one miracle will lead to another.

There has been a holy hille-full of miracles already this season. Smeared all over southern France by Toulouse in September - Ulster lost 39-3 at Les Sept Deniers that day and were distinctly fortunate to go home with the three - they recovered their wits sufficiently to record a five-point victory over the French aristocrats in the return match and set up a third meeting in the last eight.

Stunningly, Ulster then repeated the feat, winning 15-13 in a howling Friday night gale. Staggeringly, they then fought a famous rearguard action to dump the supposed tournament favourites, Stade Français, on their illustrious derrieres at the

semi-final stage. Talk about your name being on the cup.

Indeed, the predestination theorists find it impossible to believe that the unknowns of Colomiers, a non-descript, communist-controlled municipality situated in the heavily industrialised suburbs of Toulouse, will fare any better than their heavy-weight countrymen. Colomiers is not a traditional union stronghold; it is not a Beziers or a Perpignan or a Pau. Its rugby club was founded as recently as 1963 and the number of home-grown internationals can still be counted on the fingers of one hand. Until last season, when Jean-Luc Sadoury's side beat Agen to win the European Conference (a competition for also-rans), they had never won a brass franc.

In the great firmament of French rugby, Colomiers are a satellite rather than a planet. Which is precisely why they could send the Irish favourites into the black hole of defeat today. Like Brive before them - and who can forget the massacre they inflicted on Leicester two years ago? - Colomiers happily conceal their talents behind a cloak of anonymity. Ulster know all about Sadoury, one of the world's most accomplished full-backs, but are dangerously ignorant of Laurent

Labit, Patrick Tabacco, Stephane Peysson and the rest of the low-profile operatives whose precision work over five unforgettable months has guided their club to the biggest occasion in its brief and hitherto unremarkable history.

And in one very pertinent sense, it is history that bars Ulster's road to the title. The Heineken Cup, as it was known before the politicians started interfering, was for three years the exclusive property of those

who travelled furthest to challenge for it. Toulouse beat Cardiff at Cardiff Arms Park to win the inaugural competition in 1996, while Brive - given no chance whatsoever - gave Leicester what for at the same venue the following year. It was the same story last January, when Bath crossed the Channel and staged the smash and grab raid to end them all by beating the holders in Bordeaux. Home advantage? Home disadvantage, more like.

Worryingly for something approaching 48,000 of this afternoon's 49,000 crowd, Colomiers are strong in Ulster's most obvious area of weakness; they have two internationals, Stephane Graou and the state-of-the-art booker Marc Dal Maso, in their front row and their presence should ensure another 80 minutes of reverse gear discomfort for the Irish scrumage. Both Tabacco, perhaps the most effective line-out forward in the tournament, and Fabien Galthie, the former international scrum-half, passed late fitness tests yesterday. And although Mickael Carre's hamstring restricts him to bench duty, Jerome Sieurac proved a more than adequate mid-field performer in the tight semi-final victory over Perpignan.

Still, Ulster have one or two

match-winners of their own: Simon Mason, always a reliable goal-kicker, has been in golden boot form these last few weeks and if the French start getting up the nose of Clayton Thomas, the international referee from Wales, they will be made to pay for their indiscipline in the hard currency of penalty points. And what of the fly-half David Humphreys, whose resourceful captaincy in the semi-final was overshadowed only by his own play-making ingenuity? Another virtuoso effort today will surely send him scurrying better-skelter into the Ireland side for the Five Nations opener with France next weekend.

Ulster badly need to go points up in the first quarter, for if they allow Colomiers the luxury of a settling-in period, the Frenchmen will have it topped and tailed by the hour mark. It has been a strange old tournament, though: Ulster's march has more than neutralised the effects of the English boycott and left an entire nation wondering whether this whole adventure was somehow meant to be. "Above all, it's a matter of keeping our feet on the ground," mused Humphreys yesterday. Yes. And Dublin ground at that. Who would have predicted it, back home in Belfast?

ULSTER V COLOMIERS			
at Lansdowne Road			
S. Mason	15	J.-L. Sadoury	15
S. Coulter	14	M. Bilouet	14
J. Cunningham	13	S. Roque	13
J. Bell	12	J. Sieurac	12
A. Park	11	B. Liande	11
D. Humphreys	10	L. Labit	10
A. Macchett	9	F. Galthie	9
J. Fitzpatrick	8	S. Delpeuch	8
A. Clarke	7	M. Dal Maso	7
R. Irwin	6	S. Graou	6
M. Blair	5	G. Moro	5
G. Longwell	4	J.-M. Lorenzi	4
S. McNery	3	B. De Gues	3
A. Ward	2	P. Tabacco	2
T. McWhirter	1	S. Peysson	1
Replacements: 16 S. McDowd 17 B. Cunningham 18 S. Bell 19 D. McCann 20 P. Murray 21 R. Leslie 22 R. Weir			
Referee: C. Thomas (Ireland)			
Kick-off: 2.45pm (BBC 1)			

Wasps roused to chase Springbok Teichmann

THE RUGBY retirement home known as the Allied Dunbar Premiership looks like attracting another international once his test career is over. The buzz is that Gary Teichmann, to join them after this year's World Cup.

"They (Wasps) have been in touch and I've spoken to them, but it's very initial," Teichmann said. So initial, indeed, that Nigel Melville, Wasps director of rugby, had no inkling that Teichmann was interested in Loftus Road until he read speculation in the press.

BY DAVID LLEWELYN

"We read in the papers that we were talking to Teichmann," Melville said, "so we thought we had better speak to his agent, which we have now done. I expect to speak to Teichmann himself sooner rather than later, probably after another conversation with his agent."

The Springbok No 8 Teichmann has reportedly been offered around £200,000, although whether that is over one, two or three years is not known. Melville denies making any offer and added: "I don't even know

if we can afford that sort of money. Teichmann is a fantastic player and we would be foolish not to have followed up on the speculation."

One player who definitely moved yesterday was Richmond's Welsh international prop, John Davies, who has followed Scott Quinnell to Stradey Park, although he will not feature in Llanelli's team for today's Welsh Rugby Union Challenge Trophy final against Pontypridd.

And spectators at Stradey Park for the game, which kicks off at 5.30pm, will not see any of the nine players in the Wales squad. Welsh

coach Graham Henry has reached an amicable agreement with both clubs for the players to be pulled out of the match.

Swansea rest their wing Matthew Robinson for the Swalec Cup tie against Newport, fuelling speculation that he will be on the bench against Scotland at Murrayfield next weekend.

The fifth round of the Tetley's Bitter Cup sees a resurgent London Irish travelling to Frank's Gardens looking for a repeat of their convincing Premiership victory over the Saints earlier this month.

Northampton's Argentine front row, Frederico Mendez, said: "We made too many mistakes that night. You won't see the same errors this time. We have to tackle all afternoon. And we will have Matt Dawson back at scrum-half."

Henley are taking 1,500 supporters with them to Kingsholm for the tie against Gloucester. The National League One club, who knocked out Premiership One Bedford in the previous round, are eager to play in the cauldron of sound.

The Gloucester crowd can give visiting teams terrible stick, but

they also appreciate good rugby. With their expansive, all-out attacking approach, coupled with a miserly defence which has conceded 17 tries in the league, Henley should provide the Cherry and Whites with plenty of problems.

Newcastle's all Premiership One tie at North-East neighbours West Hartlepool was given spice when former England and Gosforth prop Colin White, now the assistant coach at West, declared: "Newcastle is just a cheque book club now, one with which I no longer have any affinity."

In another tie involving Division

One teams, Harlequins have put booker Keith Wood and lock Garrick Morgan on the bench and have to do without the services of fly-half Thierry Lacroix (concussed) and coach-captain Zinzan Brooke. Their opponents, London Scottish, are without Scotland international centre Ronnie Eriksson.

Wendell Sailor makes his last appearance for Leeds at Leicester. Tomorrow sees Lynedey of National League One entertain Cup holders Saracens at Regent's Park. Wasps play Waterloo, and Richmond are at home to Exeter.

Sydney's ugly answer to Olympic riddle

THERE COMES a point in most people's lives when they stop and ask themselves: Who am I? What am I doing? Why am I here? For me, that moment came during September 1993 as I sat in a stuffy, viewless room with approximately 50 fellow journalists who, for all I knew, were experiencing the same feelings of angst and displacement. At least they did if they had any sense.

The task upon which we were all engaged, cloistered in our Monte Carlo conference room, was that of predicting to which city the International Olympic Committee - cloistered in the luxurious Hotel de Paris - would award the 2000 Games.



MIKE ROWBOTTOM

drenial utterance of the Olympic oracle, Istanbul and Berlin had not even a faint hope of attracting a significant proportion of the 89 available IOC votes.

Manchester, back again

after the dismal failure of their bid for the 1996 Games, had come up with an ingenious projection of round-by-round voting which ended with them victorious. The General Election, apparently, was about to be won by the Liberal Democrats. Meanwhile, the two heavyweight contenders, Sydney and Peking, were working to each other's body.

Beyond those basic facts, for the increasingly frantic members of the Fourth Estate, there was little to catch hold of but swirls of rumour, fleeting impressions, non-attributable intimations. Theory and counter-theory travelled around the stuffy room for a long, barmy week as the five basic tools of the trade - who,

what, why, where, when - were rendered ineffectual.

Sydney, we were told, had the best technical bid - "bloody near perfect" one IOC member had claimed. But that had apparently been followed by a sense among some IOC members that the Sydney bidders had become cocksure, which had adversely affected their prospects.

Peking's bid was fronted by Chen Xitong, who as mayor of the city had ordered troops to open fire on protesting students in Tiananmen Square four years earlier. Bit of a public relations bitch there, you might think. But the IOC president, Juan Antonio Samaranch, was said to favour the Chinese because the prospect

of opening up new sporting links with their regime was the kind of thing a committee - say the Nobel Peace Prize committee - might look upon favourably.

On the day before the election, 90 white roses, one for each IOC member, were delivered to the Hotel de Paris by the International Campaign for Tibet. A message was attached to each one: "Remember the political prisoners". Would IOC members do any such thing? Hard to tell. No one was saying.

All week, individual IOC members were canvassed discreetly in hotel bars and lobbies, indicating preferences, possibilities and even, in some cases, firm commitments.

But the nature of the exercise - secret voting, with the least successful city dropping out round-by-round - meant that their true intentions seemed, to adapt Winston Churchill's phrase about Russia, a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma.

In the preceding months, Samaranch had trailed the IOC's availability teasingly around the block. In Manchester, holding hands with children from a Sale infant school, he was cheered by children waving Union Jacks. Asked whether the rain which had fallen on that day would have a dampening effect on the city's chances, he replied: "We are used to rain. When I am travelling and I find rain in a

country, I always think it is a lucky country." Oooh. Bet you say that to all the bids.

In Sydney, he was pictured with schoolchildren sporting Aboriginal decorations and costume. "I am happy to be here," he declared, "and I hope to come again, many, many times - maybe also in the year 2000!" Tell you what, clobber, play your cards right and you could be in there.

And so to the reckoning. Denis Howell, who led Birmingham's bid for the 1992 Olympics, said he had 25 votes in the bag. Birmingham polled eight votes. Eight years on, Bob Scott, leader of the Manchester bid, predicted 20 votes in the first round. Manchester polled 11 votes, and Sydney eventually de-

feated Peking by 45 votes to 43. Who could have predicted that? Even that hugely experienced observer of IOC matters, John Rodda of *The Guardian*, had called it wrongly.

But then Rodda presumably didn't know about the \$Aus105,000 (\$22,000) it now transpires that the Australian Olympic Committee president, John Coates, produced on the night before the vote with the intention of swaying two wavering African nations. Par for the course, it now appears.

Personally, I feel more settled about the whole Monte Carlo experience after this month's revelations, knowing that what was wrapped in the mystery inside the enigma was not a riddle, but a hung-

Super Bowl XXXIII: Denver face determined opposition from underdogs as they attempt to repeat last year's victory

Six-year wait for revenge fires Reeves

AN UNEXPECTED sight may have greeted the surgeons who performed a quadruple heart bypass operation on Dan Reeves last month: a deeply scarred organ full of anger and bitterness.

Reeves, head coach of the Atlanta Falcons, appears on the surface to be perfectly temperamentally suited to the peculiar demands of his profession. It is a job he has performed with distinction for 17 years; no other active coach can emulate his 172 career victories, nor his record of four Super Bowl appearances.

Despite his medical condition, Reeves will tomorrow lead the Falcons in Super Bowl XXXIII where he will face the Denver Broncos, the team which fired him six years ago. That alone adds a spicy personal subplot to America's premier sporting soap opera. Throw into the mix the fact that Denver's head coach, Mike Shanahan, and quarterback John Elway are the people Reeves holds responsible for his demise, and you have the elements of a Shakespearean drama. Watching the sidelines will be almost as much fun as observing the action on the gridiron.

It all happened six years ago, but for Reeves, the psychological wounds remain as fresh as the physical ones inflicted on his ailing heart just six weeks ago. "There's still a lot of hurt there that won't ever go away," he said. "I don't think any time you're fired, and you've been in a place for 12 years and had the success we had, that you understand it or [can] say it doesn't hurt you." The story goes that Reeves hired Shanahan, an exciting young prospect, to coach his wide receivers in 1984, promoting him

BY NICK HALLING
in Miami

to offensive co-ordinator a year later. All seemed well. With Elway masterful at quarterback, Denver went to three Super Bowls, in a four-year spell in the late 1980s, and although they lost them all, the Broncos were recognised as a force within the game.

Shanahan joined the Los Angeles Raiders as head coach in 1988, but lasted less than two years, and when he was sacked Reeves swiftly brought him back to Colorado, this time as quarterbacks coach. Problems soon followed. In a 1990 report in the *Denver Post* Elway was quoted as saying that communication between himself and Reeves was "poor". The rift deepened as Shanahan and Elway became increasingly close. Reeves believed that his assistant was working with the player behind his back and even creating plays without the knowledge or permission of the head coach. Unwilling to be marginalised, Reeves dismissed Shanahan in 1992 for insubordination.

A year later, following a mediocre 1992 campaign, Reeves too was gone, and Elway described playing for his former boss as "hell". After a two-year hiatus during which Wade Phillips tried unsuccessfully to revive the franchise's fortunes, Shanahan returned as the head man with a glowing endorsement from the veteran quarterback. Denver have been irresistible since winning their first Super Bowl last year and are heavily favoured to retain their title on Sunday.

Reeves then spent four years with the New York Giants taking them to the play-offs before landing the thankless task

of attempting to revive Atlanta in 1997. The Falcons, one of the league's most consistent losers, had won just three games the year before and the enormity of the task was evident as they won just once in Reeves' first eight games.

Since then, the turnaround has been dramatic. The Falcons have lost just four times in 26 outings: 60-1 underdogs at the start of the campaign, they are without doubt the most surprising team in Super Bowl history. Reeves has rightly been named coach of the year for the achievement, his reputation restored beyond debate.

At times this week, however, his feud with Shanahan and Elway has threatened to overshadow the occasion. His resentment has not dimmed with the years. "You never forget those things," said Reeves. "But am I a person that's not going to speak to Mike Shanahan or John Elway? I don't live my life like that, but I won't go out to eat with them or go socially to a function."

A surprised Shanahan says his relationship with his former boss is beyond repair, and denies accusations of undermining his previous employer's authority. "I thought we were both going to take the high road on this and I don't really understand it," he said.

Elway, appearing for what may be the last game of a glittering 16-year career is maintaining diplomatic dignity through it all. "That was six years ago," he said. "I've moved on, and I concentrate on the good times. We had a hell of a lot more good times when he was here than bad times."

Can the feud be resolved? Not according to Reeves. "You'd have to get us in a room with a psychiatrist and make us talk about what happened," he said. "But that will never happen because somewhere along the line, you find somebody who's not telling the truth."

Since airing his grievances earlier this week under the intense scrutiny of 3,500 media representatives assembled in Miami for the game, Reeves has apologised for his words, the apology being accepted by Shanahan. In a real sense however, his heart has been laid bare in more ways than one in recent weeks. Perhaps a victory over the team that caused him such trauma six years ago will finally allow Dan Reeves' wounds to heal.



Jamal Anderson, the Atlanta Falcons running back, turns the tables during a press conference at the Pro Player Stadium in Miami

Allsport

Falcons 'guarantee' victory

NOT SINCE the New York Jets 30 years ago has there been such a surprise Super Bowl participant as the Atlanta Falcons, writes Nick Halling.

Back in 1969, in the build-up to the game, the Jets' flamboyant quarterback "Broadway" Joe Namath famously guaranteed an upset victory over the favoured Baltimore Colts. Perhaps that is what Atlanta cornerback Ray Buchanan had in mind when he made the same prediction earlier this week, guaranteeing an upset in tomorrow's game.

"It's for fun," he said, "but having a guarantee is more of a confidence thing. It's not like a slap in Denver's face. This is reality. This football team has an opportunity to shock the world."

To do that, they must first stop the Broncos' top-ranked

running game, led by Terrell Davis. One of only four players ever to rush for 2,000 yards in a season, Davis is in compelling form, as he showed with game-winning performances in the play-offs against the Miami Dolphins and the Jets. If the Falcons cannot stop him, it is unlikely that Buchanan's guarantee will stand up.

"If you shut down Terrell Davis, your chance of winning goes up," said Atlanta linebacker Jessie Tuggle. "They depend so much on running the ball, so that's what we have to do."

The Falcons boast a solid ground attack of their own, with Jamal Anderson producing a string of impressive performances this season. However, the Denver defensive unit has been imposing in the play-offs, and in Bill Romanowski they

have a formidable run-stopper. With both teams committed to containing the run, Davis and Anderson could be in for a painful night's work.

If it becomes a passing game, Atlanta and Denver appear well matched. The Falcons' veteran quarterback Chris Chandler is playing the best football of his 11-year career and is working effectively with his receivers, Tony Martin and Terence Mathis. Both have the ability to take advantage of Denver's perceived weakness against a well-thrown ball.

Similarly, the Broncos will simply turn to John Elway should Davis falter. The team's inspirational leader for 16 years, Elway has retained the ability to make the big play at the crucial time. His 6ft 5in receiver Ed McCaffrey is likely to cause

damage against the effective but small Atlanta defensive backs.

The coaching duel will be fascinating because both head coaches have been here many times before. Atlanta's Dan Reeves will be participating in his ninth Super Bowl as player and coach while his counterpart, Mike Shanahan, has won championship titles with the San Francisco 49ers and Denver.

"His ability to relate to his players is great," said the Denver tight-end Shannon Sharpe. "He's as hard as he needs to be but he can be easy too. Mike doesn't have a hard time getting guys to play for him because we enjoy him."

The Broncos also enjoy another significant advantage in that, as winners last year, most of them know what to expect from an occasion that has over-

awed many teams in the past.

In contrast, the Falcons only boast three players with Super Bowl experience and only one of them, former Green Bay Packers safety Eugene Robinson, has tasted success. However, the Falcons believe that, as with Denver against Green Bay a year ago, their status as underdogs can work to their advantage. After 33 seasons of mediocrity, they have confounded expectation to arrive in Miami, and just like Namath's Jets three decades ago they are full of confidence.

"We came in this year with the intention of changing the whole image of the Atlanta Falcons, and that's what we've done," said Tuggle. "This is the ultimate goal, but being part of it is not enough. I came here for one reason, and that's to win."



Dan Reeves apologised for this week's outburst

Allsport

Donewald on misconduct charge

THE BASKETBALL authorities will focus on Moorways in Derby tonight, where the Storm's volatile coach, Boh Donewald, will be under pressure to behave after an extraordinary week even by the American coach's disciplinary standards.

Just four days ago he was banned for two games and fined £300 after his latest appearance before the disciplinary committee, on his 29th birthday. Now, Donewald has been charged with misconduct following a report by the commissioner, Mal-

BASKETBALL
BY RICHARD TAYLOR

colm Heath, about his antics at Derby's Budweiser League victory over Birmingham Bullets at Moorways last Saturday.

Uniquely for basketball, however, and of most concern for the League and English Basketball Association is that the police are now involved after complaints by Birmingham fans about Donewald's actions. A police officer was called to the arena on

Saturday and three Birmingham supporters have made complaints to Derby police.

On Tuesday Donewald was dealt with for abusing the officials at Derby's game with Greater London Leopards, after he had been fined another £300 earlier in the season for criticising officials after the defeat at Thames Valley Tigers.

Donewald may find it hard to be on his best behaviour tonight against a team he loves to beat, as third-placed Derby face second-placed Manchester Giants.

London Towers confirmed the worst kept secret of transfer deadline week yesterday by signing the American guard-forward Randy Duck to replace fellow American Eric Kubel. Duck was due to make his debut at Newcastle Eagles last night.

Two other new signings make debuts tonight: Justin Phoenix plays for Birmingham at Leopards and 7ft 2in Adam McCanna for Worthing Bears at home to Chester Jets. The Bears have not won since beating Chester on 3 October - 24 games ago.

YET AGAIN the absence of important players will affect tomorrow's National League programme. This time it is caused by an England Under-18 training camp at Bisham Abbey. Worst affected will be Beeston, at home to third-placed Southgate, who will be missing Philip Sully, Matt Taylor and Andy West.

Graham Griffiths, Beeston's manager, expressed his amazement that hockey had not got to grips with the problem. "It would never happen in football."

HOCKEY
BY BILL COLWILL

he said. "Can you imagine Michael Owen being released by Liverpool to play for England Under-18s? I find the whole thing extremely frustrating."

Sadly we have faced this problem during the second half of the season for several years. And what's more we are almost certainly going to have to go into Europe at Easter missing the three of them."

The Hockey Association, however, will simply say that there is just not enough time in the season to fit everything in.

Perhaps England should follow the German example and split the National League season into two halves with a long mid-season break, playing on after Easter into the summer months. After all, hockey no longer shares grounds with cricket nor are top players able to play both games.

Andy Bilson, the Teddington coach, has left the club and has

signed for local Midland club, Northampton Saints, whom he has also been coaching. The Teddington captain, Brett Garrard, has taken over as coach for tomorrow's visit of Cannock.

Houslow entertain East Grinstead, who beat Brooklands 9-1 last week.

With the arrival from Reading of Mark Hoskins, the Guildford coach, Ian Jennings, believes they can give the leaders, Canterbury, a tough fight and possibly even take the points.

Set the controls for the heart of Wimbledon

IT SEEMS that following last week's eulogy to him in this column, the powers of Barry Davies have increased, now he has the gift of bilocation too, commenting on the tennis from Australia and the ice skating from Prague, all in the same day. How on earth does he do it? The tennis cubicle in Television Centre is yards and yards away from the skating cubicle.

It is not just him: Sue Barker is at it as well, though in her case she has to fight against busy back-projections. What's the point of these? Are they to hoodwink us into thinking Barker is sitting on a bridge in downtown Prague? When we've just seen her in bas-relief against the Melbourne skyline?

Thursday's *Horizon* was about supermoose, which ex-

CHRIS
MAUME
SPORT ON TV



plode with the force of 10 billion stars (the expansion of the universe is speeding up by the way, not slowing down as the boffins thought, outstripping gravity and leading eventually to a cold, dark, largely empty universe in a few billion years' time, or whenever Manchester City return to the Premiership, whichever is sooner). On the tennis highlights programme earlier the same day (BBC2) it

was possible to witness something roughly similar, though it is to be hoped that the career of Amelie Mauresmo, the French Amazon who crushed world No 1 Lindsay Davenport underfoot in the semi-finals, lasts a little longer than the three weeks it takes for a supernova to burn itself out.

like shrinking violet herself, and for the spectator, it was like watching two guys play.

Not that there is anything wrong with that - this is not one of those laments for the days when women only served overarm because their hustle got in the way. I am all for strong women, and the ferocity of some of the exchanges between Davenport and Mauresmo was thrilling.

Mauresmo is a big girl, no doubt about it - upper arms like Henry Cooper, fabulous huge shoulders that radiate power and presence. Apart from the protrusions at the front, and with a few adjustments down below, I would do good for a body like that. With a big, determined jaw and eyes like a cobra, she has the granite-like impassiv-

ty of a Borg - the sportsman, that is, not one of the bionic, "resistance-is-futile" *Star Trek* baddies. Set the controls for the heart of Wimbledon.

It was appropriate that on the weekend of the fourth round of the FA Cup, *Casualty* (BBC1) should have a footballing plot. Tigers, Holby's local small-time team, are in a David 'n' Goliath Cup tie. Karl the star striker has a hangover from hell, so the spivvy thug of a manager blackmails his predecessor as star striker, now the embittered perennial substitute, to slip a little something into his glucose to pick him up.

They go 1-0 down and Karl is struggling. Vic Harkness, the grizzled trainer and Karl's father figure, shouts: "He'll have a heart attack!" I wonder how

this plot is about to develop, you say to yourself. Karl, despite his knee injury, equalises. Then he has a heart attack.

There were a good few things wrong in the veracity department: for a start, some players do take, have taken, stimulants of diverse varieties (just ask Willie Johnston), but on-field heart attacks are about as common as Liverpool winning an FA Cup tie against Manchester United. And the idea that a "top Spanish club" would send its manager to watch a player who had not even made it beyond the lower reaches is laughable.

It seems *Casualty* specialises in improbable plot lines, though: a fan who had bought tickets for the match appeared to have knocked his son about for losing them; the lad, it trans-

pired, a 14-year-old alcoholic with cirrhosis of the liver, had been beating dad up for ages.

Again, I am sure this has happened once or twice, somewhere, but not very often (no doubt someone will regale me with figures to demonstrate the appalling prevalence of the frightening unseen menace of Teenage Alcoholic Lower-League Football Fans abusing their father because mum died three years ago and he didn't cry about it - the charity is called TAL-LFF Anon. I am told, if there are any sufferers out there).

Still, at the end, after a turbulent we-can-work-this-out-together scene, son asked dad the score in the match. "It was a draw," he replies. "We have a second chance." Do you think he

was referring just to the football match there? Or might there have been a double meaning?

There was no ambiguity about Will Carling's appearance on *Sporting Greats* (BBC2, Thursday): as an exercise in rehabilitation through self-deprecation it was shameless, if not wholly successful.

"I had no effect on the team that week - obviously," he said of his start as England captain. "And it went on for eight years." This was a typical response, reeking of apparent humility. It's impossible to shake off the feeling with Carling, though, that it is all an act, and with a bit too much slap and what looked like dyed eyebrows, he came across like Dirk Bogarde as Aschenbach in *Death in Venice*. It made me feel queasy, anyway.

Australian Open: Russian's rout of Haas ensures showdown with Enqvist avoids 'seedless final' tag

Kafelnikov beats history man

YEVGENY KAFELNIKOV overwhelmed Tommy Haas 6-3, 6-4, 7-5 yesterday to spare the 1999 Australian Open a dubious place in the sport's history. The 10th-seeded Russian brushed aside the 20-year-old German in a 113-minute semi-final to rule out the prospect of the first unseeded men's singles final in the Open era.

There were clear indications of Haas's fate as early as his first service game when Kafelnikov broke to go 2-0 up. The 1996 French Open champion went on to serve 16 aces and significantly made only 27 unforced errors to his opponent's 41. The 24-year-old Kafelnikov said: "I knew I had to stay tough and focused and I did that wonderfully."

Kafelnikov, however, quickly claimed that the in-form Thomas Enqvist would start the final as favourite, the Swede having won two Open warm-up tournaments and having beaten two seeds - including the twice US Open winner Pat Rafter - in the early rounds here.

"Hopefully I will get my chances but I feel like I'm definitely the underdog," said Kafelnikov who missed the last two Australian Opens through injury. In 1997, he was ruled out when he broke a finger while battering a punchbag in the gym and last year injured his knee in a skiing accident.

There was no room for doubt about Kafelnikov's performance yesterday. He started strongly against a tentative Haas and gained important early service breaks in the first two sets. It was the first time Haas had made it past the third round in a Grand Slam tournament and he began nervously. The match was almost over by the time he began to find his range with damaging groundstrokes.

TENNIS
BY DERRICK WHITE
in Melbourne

Kafelnikov completely outplayed Haas, breaking the baseline's serve in the 11th game of the final set and then calmly serving out the match to love. He varied his tactics constantly, slamming 16 aces and also drawing Haas into long rallies. Kafelnikov said he would need to adopt similar tactics against Enqvist, who beat the unseeded Nicolas Pietrangeli of Ecuador 6-3, 7-5, 6-1 in the first semi-final.

"The one thing I do have to do to stay in the match with Thomas is to hold my serve," Kafelnikov said. "I know if I stay in the match with him I will have my chances."

The semi-final was played with Melbourne Park's retractable centre court roof closed after light rain fell, a decision that did not please Kafelnikov. "I was actually disappointed with the decision, because Tommy beat me once indoors," he said.

His win buried the prospect of the first unseeded men's singles final in more than 30 years of Open tennis. Richard Krajicek beat Maliwa Washington in what was originally billed as an unseeded final at Wimbledon in 1996. But an International Tennis Federation spokeswoman said Wimbledon officials decided after the final that Krajicek was a seed, replacing Austria's Thomas Muster who had withdrawn from the tournament.

Other than that, the only unseeded final was at the 1966 US National Championships when Fred Stolle beat his fellow Australian John Newcombe 4-6, 12-10, 6-3, 6-4. Open tennis began in 1968.



Russia's Yevgeny Kafelnikov keeps Tommy Haas at arm's length during yesterday's men's singles semi-final in Melbourne

Allsport

Two weeks ago, punters had the unseeded Enqvist at 33-1 to win the championship. After winning an exhibition event two days before the Open his odds improved to 9-1. Now the 24-year-old Swede, who had not made it past the quarter-finals of a Grand Slam event until now

is the strong favourite to take the title.

Enqvist has yet to lose a match this year, with titles from Adelaide and Melbourne warm-up events affirming his return from foot surgery last year.

"I'm quite amazed to see how strong he is when he comes

back after an injury," said compatriot Jonas Bjorkman, who reached the doubles final with Australian partner Pat Rafter in a five-set semi-final against the second seeds, Todd Woodbridge and Mark Woodforde.

Bjorkman tipped Enqvist to win the title. "Thomas is so

strong, and so focused, to take his chance when he really has it. And he seems to be more ready than ever to win a Grand Slam," Bjorkman said.

Rafter, who was seeded third but beaten in the third round by Enqvist, was not quite so sure, as he pointed to an in-form

Kafelnikov, who is under no pressure. The US Open champion would not, however, begrudge Enqvist the title many thought the Australian himself would take.

"If he wins he's a very deserving winner, no doubt about it," Rafter said.



Martina Hingis (left) and Anna Kournikova celebrate their Australian Open doubles title yesterday

Storm over man-sized Mauresmo

THE WORLD'S top two women players have denied they were talking about anything but tennis when they said Australian Open finalist Amelie Mauresmo was like a man.

The 19-year-old Mauresmo has powerful shoulders and a game to match. She saw off the world No 1, Lindsay Davenport, in the semi-finals on Thursday with a fearsome display of power tennis. She is also openly gay and speaks freely about her relationship with a woman who travels with her on the tour.

But the player was said by her coach to be angered by comments from Davenport and

a remark attributed to defending champion Martina Hingis, whom she will play in today's women's final.

Hingis was quoted as saying in a German-language news conference on Thursday: "She travels with her girlfriend. She is half a man." Or in German: "Sie ist ein halber Mann."

Mauresmo's coach, Christophe Fournerie, told Channel Seven television: "She has the feeling that she played really well and she did well, so she's surprised that the number one and the number two in the world could talk about her like that. She thought everyone

would talk about her tennis and not her private life. That is a bit surprising for her because she's young."

Hingis and Davenport both said their words had been twisted by the press. Hingis denied she had ever used the "half-man" remark.

"Who would say that?" Hingis said. "She's a girl, she's playing tennis. I have to beat her on court, not somewhere else. She has got a lot of topspin and it's not... that she is a man but she plays like a man. That's what we were saying."

Davenport - who said after being beaten by Mauresmo, "I

thought I was playing a guy" - accused reporters of taking her words out of context.

"You guys love to write the worst line possible and you have probably hurt a very nice girl," she told a news conference yesterday.

The row precedes an already intriguing women's final. Mauresmo, the former top-ranked junior who pumps iron to build up her muscles, twice took Hingis to three sets last year. Clearly distressed by the controversy, she avoided cameras at Melbourne Park yesterday and went to Kooyong, a few miles away.

Hingis and Anna Kournikova took their first Grand Slam title together yesterday when they beat the top seeds, Lindsay Davenport and Natasha Zvereva, 7-5, 6-3 in the women's doubles final.

The pair won five successive games from the ninth game of the first set to dominate the middle stages of the match on Melbourne Park's Centre Court. Last year Hingis became only the third woman in history to complete a doubles Grand Slam. She has won the past three Australian Open doubles titles and is aiming for her third successive singles title.

TODAY'S NUMBER

5,000

The number of dollars (£3,125) that Super Bowl rings cost. The NFL buys 125 for the winners, plus 125 pieces of jewellery costing no more than half that price for the losers.

Christie hoping for sharp performance

LINFORD CHRISTIE gets back to the sharp end of athletics today as he comes temporarily out of retirement to contest the 60 metres at the Lynx Express AAA Indoor Championships in Birmingham.

The former world and Olympic 100m champion, who will be 39 in April, will not be able to shave for six months if he fails to beat 6.70sec for the distance - a challenge laid down to him by the group of athletes he now coaches, including European 100m champion Darren Campbell and world indoor 400m silver medalist Jamie Baulch.

The younger runners, tired of hearing Christie tell them how he could still beat them even though he had retired from top class racing in 1997,

ATHLETICS
BY MIKE ROWBOTTOM

set him a target which he could not resist trying for. But Christie looks likely to remain clean shaven given his performance in last Sunday's Karlsruhe indoor 60 metres race, where he finished second to Marc Blume of Germany in a time of 6.57sec in what was his first competitive race since he turned out for his club, Thames Valley Harriers, last August.

Christie will face a younger generation of challengers at the National Indoor Arena, including Jason Livingston, who has recorded 6.81 this season, European indoor silver medalist Jason Gardener and world ju-

nior 100 and 200 metres champion, Christian Malcolm.

The event gives UK Athletics, whose midweek launch was overshadowed by the doping controversy surrounding European 200 metres champion Doug Walker, the opportunity to get back on to the kind of track it prefers.

A ruling on whether Walker will have a case to answer after providing two urine tests believed to have shown up traces indicating the banned steroid nandrolone is expected to be made early next week.

Christie is not the only world title winner at the National Indoor Arena. Steve Cram, the former world record holder for the mile, will be making his commenting debut for BBC,

who cover their first domestic athletics meeting since 1985.

Cram was commenting for Channel 4 last season but has been signed up by the Beeb since they took over the athletics contract last autumn in a five-year deal thought to be worth around £15m.

The man who used to be known as the Jarrow Arrow will be working alongside David Coleman, who at the age of 72 is "cutting back on his commentary" according to a BBC spokesman.

Ashia Hansen, who won the European indoor triple jump last year in a world record, is due to gauge her current form in what serves as the official trial for the World Indoor Championships to be held in Maebashi, Japan, in March.

Winners will qualify automatically, assuming they have qualifying marks.

Jo Wise, who like Hansen won a Commonwealth title last September, is an entrant for the women's long jump.

While Christie runs the shorter distance, Campbell is concentrating on tomorrow's 200 metres event, which Malcolm is also intending to contest. Campbell says he doesn't want to beat his coach, which is very thoughtful of him.

The longer sprint looks like being just as competitive as the 60 metres, given that it is also due to include 400 metres runners Solomon Wariso, who returned from warm weather training in California just over a week ago, and Jamie Baulch. In the high jump, Olympic

bronze medalist Steve Smith is planning to take part in his first competition since he injured his neck in a training accident last July. Smith, who spent almost two weeks in hospital after his injury, completed his first proper jump earlier this month.

Colin Jackson, who retained his European high hurdles title last summer, is a clear favourite for the 60m hurdles title, having warmed up for the event by winning over that distance in Karlsruhe, where he clocked 7.47sec.

Du'Aine Ladejo, the former European 400m champion who is now concentrating on the decathlon, is among the other competitors due to contest the event, as is Paul Gray, the 1994 Commonwealth high hurdles bronze medalist.

BIG FIGHT PROMOTION!

UNDISPUTED HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP OF THE WORLD

EVANDER HOLYFIELD

v LENNOX LEWIS

Venue: MADISON SQUARE GARDENS

Date: SATURDAY 13TH MARCH 1999

Prices: FROM £599PP

inc. Big Fight Ticket

Includes: ★ Transatlantic Flight ★ Airport Taxes ★

★ 2 Nights Hotel Accommodation ★

★ Round Trip Airport Transfers New York ★

★ BIG FIGHT TICKET ★

RESERVATIONS HOTLINE: 0181 559 8966

Brochure request/admin line: 0181 559 7259

All Major Credit Cards Accepted

TRAVELPIANERS



The F.A. Premier League.

It's tough.

It's tense.

It's close.

And now it's free.

Subscribe to ONdigital now and get
Sky Sports 1 free for six months and watch
live F.A. Carling Premiership football.

No dish, no cable. All you need is an
aerial and an ONdigital box.

Sky Sports 1 through an aerial
0808 100 0101

digital
on

Offer closes February 26, 1999. All subscription payments are quoted monthly and are inclusive of VAT. Minimum subscription period is 12 months. Subject to status. A one-off connection fee of £20 is payable with first subscription payment. Availability of channels and terms of offer may vary according to coverage in your area. Reception may depend on the type and condition of aerial installation. To qualify for the Sky Sports 1 offer you must be a new subscriber to ONdigital. ONdigital will not charge you for 6 months for Sky Sports 1 but will charge you for any other premium channels you choose as if you do not receive Sky Sports 1. Offer not available for Menu D. Different offer available for Menu E. Offer subject to availability of Sky Sports 1 in your area. ONdigital reserves the right to withdraw the offer at any time. Offer not available in conjunction with any other ONdigital offer.

0808 100 0101

BY GREG WOOD

contender himself, and just one of a strong team from the champion trainer's yard which could dominate today's card.

Unsinkable Boxer, who runs in the novice handicap chase, is another Pie runner who should be back for the Festival.


His chasing debut was comfortable enough, but he would have beaten the same rivals just as easily over hurdles, and today's field offers a much stronger challenge.

If anything is to beat Lady Rebecca in the Cleeve Hurdle, it will probably be Commence Court, but again, it is not really a race to bet on. The last two events, though, are more tempting, with **EVEN FLOW** (map 4.05) and **Behrajan** (4.40) the ones to back.

The Great Yorkshire Chase at Doncaster offers any number of possibilities at first sight, but there may be fewer serious contenders than the size of the field suggests. The Toiscach will be the choice of many, despite his poor run in the Hennessy Gold Cup last time, but the value could lie with another horse whose last outing was a disappointment. Profound (next best 3.10) was roundly beaten at Aintree in November, but previously looked a horse to follow when winning on his British debut. **Anabranch** (3.40) could be another value bet at the same meeting, while **Young Tunno** (1.15) and **River Unction** (2.15) have good chances as Ayre



Paul Nicholls with See Mo



to repeat last year's Pillar Ch



...ease success Edward White

but Godolphin's racing manager, Simon Crisford, said is among their entries in the first leg of the US Triple along with Comeonmoon, Manner and Charmee.

Crisford said: "We wish to see how he gets on in the sales in Dubai before making a decision on where he will run. We are keeping our options open but his owner, Sheikh Hamud bin Rashid Al Jaber, has the right credentials for the Kentucky Derby and we had him here last winter always moved very nicely on the sand track at Al Quoz."

Godolphin could instead represent him in the Guineas. Jossr Algharhoud, Hitaiz Dubai Millennium, Winad and Ladbrokes reacted favourably to Al Jaber's offer for the Guineas.

2,000 GUINEAS

	H	L
Aljazz	9-1	9-1
Majid	7-1	8-1
Starline	16-1	10-1

H W Halls H R, L Ladbrokes, T Ties

Al-Jabbar
for the
crown.
Word-
will wait
his tri-
a de-
m. We
open-
man,

SON.
to
(i)

Ken-
he can
as the
nce. Al-
als for
when
ter he
ely on
oz.
ead be
eas by
sh or
m Hill
by of
a run

Y
8-1
7-1
10-1
with a car

AYR

HYPERION

12.45 Quick March	2.50 Mr Mahdlo
1.15 Scotia Nostra	3.25 Monrave
1.45 Lord Podgski	4.00 Cambrlan Dawn
2.15 Maître De Musique	

GOING: Heavy

♣ Left-hand galloping course, run-in 210yds.

♣ Course is E of town on A756. After 620m (before turn from Glasgow) an ADMISSION: Cls £14; Grandstand 17 IOAFs (incl. seats) £10; Club Room Free.

FIVE-YEAR STATISTICS

♣ LEADING TRAINERS: Mrs M Reveley 24-12 (57.1%); L Lungu 22-155 (42.4%); J J O'Neill 19-72 (17.4%); P Monteith 18-120 (12.5%); C Parker 13-84 (13.8%).

♣ LEADING JOCKEYS: A Dobbin 23-76 (21.5%); B Storey 24-158 (12.2%); P Niven 19-72 (7.6%); R Supple 10-60 (12.0%); T Wood 19-35 (12.5%); R McGrath 9-60 (15%).

♣ FAVOURITES: 16-138 (53%).

♣ UNRATED BEST TIME, Surly (on heaved 215), Possamistic Kid (25.5).

[illegible][illegible]

FORM GUIDE

Scotia Neastra: A winner here and at Carlsle (foe: Menahur just over a length and 5lb weights) in testing ground before a fine 2nd to the In-form King Of Sports at Cheltenham.

Course Doctor: Latest two wins gained on the course, though overstated on subsequent visit here. Overhauled by Bobby Grant in the testing ground at Newcastle a fortnight ago.

Menahur: Mid-jockey dayover over hurdles and second from Mr Frangipani in the seat at Newcastle before being beaten a distance by the evergreen Oriel at Haydock. Bark caught on the run-in and beaten just over a length by Scotia Neastra at Carlsle but 5lb pull.

Young Tom: Good ground hurdles hurdler and man well up to this distance at Ascot (4th) in testing ground. Justifying favourites at Newcastle.

Single Soldier: 7-length to 2nd at Epsom and 8lb out of handover when 4th at Scotton Green at Haydock, staying on well in 12th, both out of handicap today.

VERDICT: Scotia Neastra was an odds-on shot when he picked up a win from Menahur at Carlsle in November but the outcome is tricky to predict with Menahur carrying a 5lb pull. However, they could both be stretched to handle **COURSE DOCTOR**, who was gained both chase wins on the course and sailed by a return visit after losing to the same foe.

1.45	TOTE GOLD TROPHY TRIAL H'CAP HURDLE (£) £15,000 added 2m Penalty Value £9,968	BBC1
1	4252P JAROCIN (POL) (B) (Sgt & Patsy) Mrs D Thornton 6 12 0 ... D Patsy bay white and enamel green chestnut, royal blue sleeves, enamel green accents	
2	2821A CAULKER (B) (CO) (T) A Barnes & M Stanes 6 11 11 ... S Taylor grey blue and enamel green chestnut, royal blue sleeves, enamel green accents	S Taylor
3	5194A LORD BRIDGEMAN (NZ) (B) (A) W & A, Henson 5 Sprockelers 6 11 9 ... X Alquist (S) maroon and grey quartered, all maroon sleeves, grey accents	X Alquist (S)
4	1152Q LORD PODDING (B) (C) Mrs G Smyth P Marnock 6 12 0 ... C Marnock (S) enamel green, light blue chevrons and light blue, enamel green sleeves, light blue chevrons and light blue, enamel green	C Marnock (S)
5	254-2 QAT COUTURE (B) (C) (B) Jockharys & Marnock Lingo 11 10 11 ... R Suptele white, brown hooped sleeves, orange cap	R Suptele
6	11431 EPONINE (C) (C) Eric A Elliott E Ekins 5 11 11 ... O Bradley enamel green and white quartered, black sleeves, white cap	O Bradley
7	2231F CRISTAL PRINCE (C) (C) Mrs L Winkler A Vineyard 7 12 5 ... N Homicks (B) dark green, red and white quartered, red sleeves, red cap	N Homicks (B)
8	1694A WELL APPOINTED (C) (C) Gunning & Marnock 10 11 M & Gibson (T) dark green and light green elements, dark green sleeves, light green cap	M & Gibson (T)

FORM FICHE

Marceline: Antagonist to the point where gain and cancer be considered
Caulfield: Tough from under who wins this race last year with only Krist. Son of Robbo and
Justin Mea at Kelso eight days ago but not suited to carrying big weights and
held by Epimone on previous night at Westerby
Lord Richfield: Dual winner at Uttoxeter this season and first took against Wally Sponcor
and Lord Lamb in a novice last time. Groom in a flesh and copes well with the
mud
Lord Doggidge: Decent bumper performer. Took on French Holly here after the hards
didn't work and will improve for the first seasonal track to Crystal Gift this time. Fine chance
with 3lb put
Oat Couture: Fourth to Crystal Gift here on reappearance and then slipped by Biaz.

CRISTAL Gitts: Backed from 10-1 to 6-1 on reappearance here (heavy) and runner-up (beaten 2nd length). Handled the ground well and interesting with Graham Bryant booked.

CRISTAL Gitts: Backed from 10-1 to 6-1 on reappearance here (heavy) and runner-up (beaten 2nd length) (Lad Podge) just over 2 lengths. May improve further but bar-top-up 3lb better off.

Well Appointed: Has won only at Carlisle and Kelso and this ground may prove too testing for him on his comeback outing.

VERDICT: Epione is on a far handicap mark after the Wetherby success and she is bound to go well with Graham Bryant in the saddle. A big weight may prove too much for little Cauldwell and the one talent to beat Epione is LORD POGGISH, who ran so well on his reappearance on this course four weeks ago. He is comparatively lightly raced and the 3lb pull should enable him to gain revenge on Cristall Gitt.

SCOTTISH HANDICAP CHASE (3) 2.10.20

ADDED ZONE 4H Penalty Value €12,173.

1-12914 SANTA CONCERTO (18) (Q) John Conklin J Lungo 10 N 11..... R Supple
baldie, red hoop, black cheeks, red amlets, red cap

P-3300 ROYAL MOUNTAINBROWNE (9) (Q) Mike J O'Kane Hs Howard 11 S 1 A S Smith
black, white, yellow, blue, green, red, orange, tan, grey, silver, orange

1-11-422 MATTHEU DE MUSIQUE (12) (Q) (R) Robert Opper M Tschurter 8 N D..... G Bradley
mauve and pink check, white sleeves

-4-3212 RIVER UNISON (16) (D) J R Grakel J Howard Johnson 9 9 9..... D Parker
black and red (faded), striped sleeves, quartered cap

S-33332 BURNT IMP (USA) (A) (L) H Masson G M Moore 8 10 2..... B Harding V
red, royal blue hood, hooped shoulders and cap

1-11293 SOLSHEIMER (8) (C) C McComick J O'Sullivan 10 2 2..... C McComick P
scarlet, blue sleeves and collar, blue cap, red hoop

1-1401 SACROSOVET (S) (Q) Campbell, Richardson A Williams 8 1 5 1 Taylor
mauve, yellow and yellow diamonds, yellow sleeves, maroon cap, yellow diamonds

--7 declared--

BETTING: 54 Brazil Concordia, 31 Melite De Musique, 32 River Unison, 41 Burnt Imp, 74 Supreme Sorcerer, 10-1 Solgring, 12-1 Royal Mountainbrowne

Total Prize Money Available: 20,000 30 mm

FORM GUIDE

Santa Concerto: Razed a Gold Cup possible between 7 lengths off to Stan On Eyre at Wertheby (GMI). Heavily. Personally weighted 60% higher than last time. Strong course will but shorter trip could be problem for this from 10-12.

Royal Mountain: Brought his form to the track for a 25% on this season's age. He was a 20% higher than last time. The track is a factor. A bit of a lead and a better finish. Swifter at Kelso last and possibly best watched now.

Maitre De Musique: Continued upward march since last track by Nelson. It was predicted to continue. Handicap (and grade) was to win, but 40% was a caution.

Wine Unleashed: From 10-12 to 10-14. A 20% higher than last time. A 20% higher than last time by Cardinal Rule from 10-12 lower since and possibly getting his head set on the ground.

Burnt Nips: Enjoys a good season. Stayed mostly within the 10-12 range by Santa Concerto. Razed a New Zealand Heavyweight last time. A 20% higher than last time. A 20% higher than last time. A 20% higher than last time.

Golden Gate: From 10-12 to 10-14. A 20% higher than last time. A 20% higher than last time. A 20% higher than last time.

Soleflight: On the upgrade with Kelso and Wetherby. With this form he will, in a Santa Concerto, and Burnt Nips on 10-12 form. He is a 20% higher than last time. A 20% higher than last time. A 20% higher than last time.

Supreme Selection: Razed a 20% higher than last time. A 20% higher than last time. A 20% higher than last time.

VERDICT: It was a real setback for Red Longue eye. SANTA CONCERTO failed to make the grade at Wertheby. The track got possibly bad on off day and it may be worth going from another chance. With 10-12 form, Santa De Musique in the lead, the place is sure to be behind and a good 20% higher than last time.

2.50		HIGHLAND MARY NOVICE HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS D) £4,000 added 3m 110yds Penalty Value £2,863	
1	22021	SIR BOB (6) (Mr E. M. Mackenzie & M. Mackenzie) 7-1	C. McCormack 63
2	33021	MR MARSH (6) (Mrs J. C. O'Shea & J. O'Shea) 5-1	B. Harding 62
3	10021	JOEY (2) (Mr J. J. O'Shea & J. O'Shea) 10-1	G. Lyle 62
4	10020	PESSIMISTIC DICK (2) (Mr P. Pepper & D. C. Thompson) 6-1	N. Horrocks 63
5	05020	THE BURGLES (2) (Mr M. McGee & S. Gault) 7-1	R. McCrath 63
6	640	YOUTIE (6) (Mrs M. Warren & M. Warren) 10-1	S. Taylor 63

1 34-364 MONTREVE (22) (D) 13-10 G Jauri 10 Goldie 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100 101 102 103 104 105 106 107 108 109 110 111 112 113 114 115 116 117 118 119 120 121 122 123 124 125 126 127 128 129 130 131 132 133 134 135 136 137 138 139 140 141 142 143 144 145 146 147 148 149 150 151 152 153 154 155 156 157 158 159 160 161 162 163 164 165 166 167 168 169 170 171 172 173 174 175 176 177 178 179 180 181 182 183 184 185 186 187 188 189 190 191 192 193 194 195 196 197 198 199 200 201 202 203 204 205 206 207 208 209 210 211 212 213 214 215 216 217 218 219 220 221 222 223 224 225 226 227 228 229 230 231 232 233 234 235 236 237 238 239 240 241 242 243 244 245 246 247 248 249 250 251 252 253 254 255 256 257 258 259 260 261 262 263 264 265 266 267 268 269 270 271 272 273 274 275 276 277 278 279 280 281 282 283 284 285 286 287 288 289 290 291 292 293 294 295 296 297 298 299 300 301 302 303 304 305 306 307 308 309 310 311 312 313 314 315 316 317 318 319 320 321 322 323 324 325 326 327 328 329 330 331 332 333 334 335 336 337 338 339 340 341 342 343 344 345 346 347 348 349 350 351 352 353 354 355 356 357 358 359 360 361 362 363 364 365 366 367 368 369 370 371 372 373 374 375 376 377 378 379 380 381 382 383 384 385 386 387 388 389 390 391 392 393 394 395 396 397 398 399 400 401 402 403 404 405 406 407 408 409 410 411 412 413 414 415 416 417 418 419 420 421 422 423 424 425 426 427 428 429 430 431 432 433 434 435 436 437 438 439 440 441 442 443 444 445 446 447 448 449 450 451 452 453 454 455 456 457 458 459 460 461 462 463 464 465 466 467 468 469 470 471 472 473 474 475 476 477 478 479 480 481 482 483 484 485 486 487 488 489 490 491 492 493 494 495 496 497 498 499 500 501 502 503 504 505 506 507 508 509 510 511 512 513 514 515 516 517 518 519 520 521 522 523 524 525 526 527 528 529 530 531 532 533 534 535 536 537 538 539 540 541 542 543 544 545 546 547 548 549 550 551 552 553 554 555 556 557 558 559 560 561 562 563 564 565 566 567 568 569 570 571 572 573 574 575 576 577 578 579 580 581 582 583 584 585 586 587 588 589 590 591 592 593 594 595 596 597 598 599 600 601 602 603 604 605 606 607 608 609 610 611 612 613 614 615 616 617 618 619 620 621 622 623 624 625 626 627 628 629 630 631 632 633 634 635 636 637 638 639 640 641 642 643 644 645 646 647 648 649 650 651 652 653 654 655 656 657 658 659 660 661 662 663 664 665 666 667 668 669 670 671 672 673 674 675 676 677 678 679 680 681 682 683 684 685 686 687 688 689 690 691 692 693 694 695 696 697 698 699 700 701 702 703 704 705 706 707 708 709 710 711 712 713 714 715 716 717 718 719 720 721 722 723 724 725 726 727 728 729 730 731 732 733 734 735 736 737 738 739 740 741 742 743 744 745 746 747 748 749 750 751 752 753 754 755 756 757 758 759 760 761 762 763 764 765 766 767 768 769 770 771 772 773 774 775 776 777 778 779 780 781 782 783 784 785 786 787 788 789 790 791 792 793 794 795 796 797 798 799 800 801 802 803 804 805 806 807 808 809 810 811 812 813 814 815 816 817 818 819 820 821 822 823 824 825 826 827 828 829 830 831 832 833 834 835 836 837 838 839 840 841 842 843 844 845 846 847 848 849 850 851 852 853 854 855 856 857 858 859 860 861 862 863 864 865 866 867 868 869 870 871 872 873 874 875 876 877 878 879 880 881 882 883 884 885 886 887 888 889 890 891 892 893 894 895 896 897 898 899 900 901 902 903 904 905 906 907 908 909 910 911 912 913 914 915 916 917 918 919 920 921 922 923 924 925 926 927 928 929 930 931 932 933 934 935 936 937 938 939 940 941 942 943 944 945 946 947 948 949 950 951 952 953 954 955 956 957 958 959 960 961 962 963 964 965 966 967 968 969 970 971 972 973 974 975 976 977 978 979 980 981 982 983 984 985 986 987 988 989 990 991 992 993 994 995 996 997 998 999 1000

2	4.00	LAND O' BURNS STANDARD NH PLAT RACE (CLASS H) E22,000 added 2m Penalty Value E1,574
1	DORRIS PAMER (4) (J) (Cawd Con)	D Easy 6 5 1 4 C McManis
2	COSSETT DAWN (4) (M) (Horn)	H Truitt
3	BOLDIERIEY (18) (J) (Dawson)	L Sides 6 5 1 4 L Comstock
4	PP-2 DANTE'S LEGS (24) (M) (D G Regg Lungs & 6)	W Dowling 2n
5	THE MURDERERS (2) (C) (Hobbs Don)	M Thomson 5 1 4 Mr J P McMahon
6	THE MONKEY (14) (P) (Barnes)	S 5 1 4 T Hepler
7	TODDY DANCER (2) (Aylesbury Investments)	N Richards 6 1 4 Mr J Crowley
8	WHATACUDDO (9) (Miles MWI)	M Thomson 5 1 4 L Cooper
9	PISH AND FISH (2) (F) (Horn)	O B 6 1 4 O Kozak
10	PLUTO (Gay Reed)	C Thornton 4 1 4
BETTING: 5-6 Field's Land, 9-1 Cambrian Dawn, 5-1 Danter's Leg, 6-1 Cooladery, Toddler Dancer, 6-1 Photo, 20-1 Borderer Pammer, 20-1 others.		
SSR: Three Plates 8-1 7 1 M Thompson [2] 1-1 ran (M) Hammett 11 ran		
FIRM VERDICT		
<p>ish ranch Cooladery looks like the only one with experience worth considering but this event looks ripe for a long shot from a mare who did not do as well as she pride and is likely to start along with Pluto but on pedigree there must be a good chance the CAMBRIAN DAWN, by Danehl out of a Welsh Pageant middle-distance</p>		

Sponsorship deal for Johnson and Thornton

TWO OF the country's highly-
young jump jockeys, Richard Johnson and Robert Thornton, will be among the first to take advantage of racing's new rules about sponsorship. The riders, both from the David Nicholson stable, have signed a deal with Toyota which will next month put the car manufacturer's name and logo on the side of their breeches and at the throat of the roll-neck shirt under their silks.

Personal sponsorship is commonplace in the majority of mainstream sports but racehorse owners - who are the jockeys' employers, by and large on a race-by-race basis - have resisted efforts by riders

BY SUE MONTGOMERY

to acquire sponsorship of their own clothing.

It took nine years of negotiation between the Jockeys' Association and the sports authorities before the go-ahead was given to the scheme last month. Carl Llewellyn was first to make the breakthrough to becoming a mobile billboard when he last week announced an agreement with another company, Docklands.

But earlier this month members decided not to participate in the scheme, a move which has dented efforts by Jockeys' Association to find a global sponsor for its members.

RESULTS

DONCASTER

Gong Good

1.00: 6m 71Yds novice handicap hurdl
1. HEDDIE BUCK (nr) Thresard 19-1
2. Mabel Aulenthush 21-1
3. Warrling 21-1
4. Striding R McGrath 8-1
Also ran: 4-1 Jay Doe Fox 16-1 (68)
Billy Norcliffe, 1-1 Arrangas, 1-4 (60),
1-6 Beoragat, 3-2 Niallar, 7-1 Im Innar, 1-1
2-4 Stirling.
Worm, 1-5 Glavurn, 2-1 Reverse Chase,
3-1 Eagle Canyon (sh), 9-1 Leabaid Lady,
1-10 Linnah, 2-2 Gull, 2-4 Duffin,
finished by Alleged out of Hallow's Hersephie
trained by J.J. Harris at Melton Mowbray for
£160, £27.50, £27.50, £250, £250, £250,
£730, De: £5940, C&F: £2385, Throast:
£106857, Mr: Forestry.

4.00: 2m 70Yds nr flat race
A. BABBY KNOWS, 7-1 Lady 3-1
2. Becarra 1-1
3. Myre 3-1
Jae Chessellies 1-1 Taboray
4. Myre 3-1
Enbrae (dist) 1-1 Esauze Turc (90),
1-10 Barton Hill, 1-4 Garden Party II,
1-10 Lord 1-1 Monte Cassinese, Capri
by Courage (50), 5-1 Corcoran, 1-1
Cromwell, Panchendashua, School Day
1-1 Falsimon.
17 m.: 1-1 (Winger) by 1-1
In The Wings out of Hallow's Hersephie
trained by J.J. Harris, total: £200,
£200, £150, £150, £150, £150, £150,
£150, £150, £150, £150, £150, £150,
Mr: Some Gas West.
Placings: £5553.00
£5553.00, £5553.00, £5553.00, £5553.00,
Place 6: £1621, Place 5: £2278

ELKERSHAM

2. Woodfield Game - *Mit A Derspiegel* 1911
3. Professor Knott - *Der Stuppige* 1911
4. Lordenbrettspiel - *Die Schachwelt* 1911
5. *Ein Eastern Game* (30), Forest Thyme, 331
6. Kalama (6th), Our Dawny, Strong Magic
7. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
8. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
9. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
10. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
11. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
12. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
13. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
14. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
15. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
16. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
17. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
18. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
19. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
20. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
21. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
22. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
23. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
24. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
25. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
26. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
27. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
28. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
29. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
30. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
31. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
32. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
33. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
34. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
35. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
36. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
37. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
38. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
39. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
40. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
41. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
42. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
43. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
44. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
45. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
46. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
47. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
48. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
49. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
50. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
51. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
52. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
53. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
54. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
55. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
56. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
57. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
58. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
59. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
60. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
61. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
62. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
63. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
64. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
65. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
66. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
67. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
68. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
69. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
70. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
71. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
72. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
73. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
74. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
75. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
76. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
77. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
78. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
79. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
80. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
81. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
82. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
83. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
84. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
85. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
86. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
87. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
88. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
89. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
90. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
91. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
92. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
93. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
94. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
95. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
96. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
97. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
98. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
99. *Die Schachwelt* 1911
100. *Die Schachwelt* 1911

LINGFIELD

HYPERION

1.25 David 2.00 Krystal Max 2.30 Love Blues
3.05 Thomas Henry 3.40 Scissor Ride 4.15
Behind The Scenes

GOING: Standard.
STALLS: Inside except 51 & 5m - outside.

DRAW ADVANCEMENT: Low numbers best up to 1m, especially 81.
• **OUTBACK**, outside, 1st & 2nd, leading corner.
• **COURSE** is SE of town on B2028, Lingfield station (nearby).
• **WIND** (Windsor, Adonis) actions: **ADMISSION**: One enclosure £10.
• **CAR PARK**: Club 12; remainder free.

FIVE-YEAR STATISTICS

• **LEADING TRAINERS**: J. Moore 55.5% (22.9%), R. Hernon 49.37% (12.4%), M. Johnston 47.27% (12.2%), G. Kellaway 44.307% (15.3%).
• **LEADING JOCKEYS**: A. Clark 74.59% (12.2%), J. Weaver 56.307% (22.1%), S. Sanders 45.563% (11.7%), W. Whitworth 34.383% (14.1%).
• **FAVOURITES**: 77-78% (33.3%).

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Margill Lady (200), Dionys (victor), 230, Merry Prince (victor), 230.

A selling-class train from last week's race, especially as the allowance is very Brabby, who is in and would not race

2.00	BLACK (CLAS
1	005-N KRYSTAL MAX 320 PALACE
2	005-30 DANCE 170
4	006-0 HURGL 110

RETTING: 47 Krystal Margill Lady

A straightforward has an outstanding

1.25	PELLEW APPTENTICE HANDICAP (CLASS G) \$2,500 added 3YO 1m	Times in the Angle
00-30	CITRO (9) BRD D Monahan 9	P Clarke 6 (8)
00-30	FEDERAL (9) G 86	P Clarke 6 (8)
00-30	SHADY DELL (9) Mchler 9	W Hunsicker 6 (8)
00-30	DAVID (8) Mch G Holloway 9	P Fenderson 6 (8)
00-30	COMPTON AURA (9) G A Butler 9	P Hobbs 5 (8)
00-30	MENT (9) G 86	C Green 2 (8)
00-40	ABSTRACT (9) W Monahan 8	J McQuitty 1 (8)
00-40	BRATNY (9) Mch 8	C Carver 7 (8)
00-01	TREN ELLIS (9) 11-2 3 Pace 7 G	D Monahan 6
	9 declared -	
BETTING: 9-1 Treen Ellis, 4-1 Perchance, 9-2 Cyron, Compton Aura, 11-2 David, 7-1 Minterail, 14-1 Bratty, 20-1 others		

FORM VERDICT

A good opportunity for LOVE ALBUES would be Wetherburn's success. However, at this level of event in France and should have advantage of the quirks of the entry system looks one for the forecast.

FORM VERDICT

A very weak maiden in which well-born AFFER would have not to be very good candidate. But THOMAS HENRY has the

FORM VERDICT

A good opportunity for LOVE ALBUES would be Wetherburn's success. However, at this level of event in France and should have advantage of the quirks of the entry system looks one for the forecast.

FORM VERDICT

A very weak maiden in which well-born AFFER would have not to be very good candidate. But THOMAS HENRY has the

[illegible]

FORM VERDICT

Since ridden from the front, HUGGITYWIT has gone from strength to strength and he should make another bold show from his ride seat. Tophan has been running well since the gate but optimum conditions (held up) in a race run at end-to-end and gallop) but today's smaller field may not be ideal, while B had as O Lovers has proved vulnerable off this higher mark before. Sealsaur Rldgs has an offputting record out to better draw out there, so may not be far away.

RESTAURANT

\$250 7f

R Cochran 5
R Brisland 7
A Clark 3
Marilyn Dwyer 1
B O C Hunter 2

1st Duquenois, 6-4

winner Harry's makes a winning move on turn to last

COLLINGWOOD HANDICAP (CLASS E)
\$3,500 added 2m Value \$2,772

321-3	ROYAL ROULETTE (11) Cj Dwyer 8 Sarcos 5 0 1 A Clark 3
200-21	BANABURY BOULIA (11) (C) Mays 9 10 0 Galobed 7 8
61-04	PATRICIA DAVID (11) (C) D Murray 58 9 6 13 Collan 6 9
41-20	FATHER SINT J (77) (D) O Sherrywood 9 9 9 9 9 9 7 8
10-43	HARK (11) (C) G Hootie 5 3 7 1 Wilgham 11
65-31	AHLEJUDLO (18) P Hootie 5 3 7 1 P Hootie 7 6 8
25-01	RED BARON (11) (C) P Hootie 5 3 7 1 P Hootie 2
24-31	SPIRIT AND SPIN (16) (C) P Hootie 5 3 7 1 P Hootie 6
55-02	BRANK (14) (P) W Hootie 5 3 7 1 P Hootie 10

[illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible]

THE SWEEPER

BY CLIVE WHITE AND NICK HARRIS

Leeds lads choose the Devils' shirts

NOT SINCE Eric Cantona took himself off to Old Trafford have Leeds United fans been forced to suffer such humiliation at the hands of their great rivals as those devotees who populate the first XI of HMS Moutrose. To their "horror and disbelief", their recent appeal to numerous Premiership clubs for a cast-off team kit met with just one response and you can guess who that was from.

It was either wear the red and white of Manchester United or just not play. But our brave boys in the South Atlantic have an unbeaten record to maintain (nine wins and one draw) against the likes of Uruguay, Chile and Panama so they swallowed their pride and pulled on the red shirt for Britain - over the top of their worn-out old Leeds jerseys.

"We couldn't believe it when the club manager decided to respond was Manchester United," said player-manager and Chief Petty Officer, Mark Mizall. "Our compromise, a hot and sticky one, is to wear a Leeds shirt underneath. It's our only option, unless Leeds United take pity and reconsider our request. Then we can give the red and white kit to our second XI."

THE NAME of Manchester United's latest acquisition was enough to make even Andy Cole and Dwight Yorke break out in a cold sweat, never mind Teddy Sheringham. Welcomed to Old Trafford recently with open arms was one D Law, but United's present-day strikers need have no fear, the individual in question being Diana Law, the daughter of the Stretford End legend, who was joining the club's rapidly expanding communications department as a deputy press officer. It goes without saying that Diana is a lifelong United fan, but despite being Manchester born and bred, the 25-year-old is also "a Scotland fan through and through", not that there are too many of her compatriots at Old Trafford these days. She is the latest in a long line of daughters of famous football dads who have gone into the media. Others include the BBC weather girl Suzanne Charlton (the daughter of Denis Law's old playmate, Sir Bobby), ITV's Gabby Yorath and Sky Sport's Kelly Dalglish.

IT ISN'T like football fans to get all sentimental about a manager who has landed them in second-bottom place in the table, but the esteem with which John Rudge is held by Port Vale fans - and the game in general - is high indeed. Today, at Portman Road, Vale fans will release 843 balloons to commemorate Rudge's 843 League games in charge at Vale Park prior to last week's sacking. It's being described by the fans as "a celebration not a protest against the club", who have been criticised for the manner

SONG SHEET
A stirring chant from
Levski Sofia, Bulgaria
Bulgaria has a lot
of natural resources,
Bulgaria has a
nation on steam.
Bulgaria has a little
bit of everything,
But only one real strong
football team.
Many teams are glimmering,
But Levski is shining,
May we step along
with Levski,
but Levski flies.
Levski, Ole, ole, ole...
Tune: Chanted as poetry

in which they disposed of the game's second longest surviving manager after Dario Gradi. However, the mood threatens to become rather darker at the next home game, - against Huddersfield, next Saturday - when the fans will be releasing 843 black balloons. Rudge, who yesterday declined an "upstairs" job at Vale Park after 19 years there, may no longer be wanted as manager but he seems to be still in demand elsewhere: he spent this week coaching none other than Manchester United, at the request of Alex Ferguson, who, coincidentally, now becomes the second longest surviving manager.

WHATEVER COMPLAINTS Morecombe fans may have this season - and lying in the top half of the Conference they cannot have too many - a lack of goals certainly isn't one of them. Last week's 2-0 defeat at Stevenage

brought up the ton for the season in the league in their 28th game, the only trouble is that their fans never know which end the goals will be coming at. No one in the Conference, or anywhere in senior football come to that, has bettered their 45-goal haul, but at the same time nor has any team, apart from Crewe Alexandra, conceded as many goals - 55. Talk about blowing hot and cold; the same club who back in August suffered the biggest defeat in Conference history - 7-0 at Leek Town - also registered the league's highest ever away win - 6-1 at Farnborough - last month. After all that, today's home game against Yeovil Town will probably end up as a goalless draw.

CLOSE BEHIND the ovals given for Messrs Beardsley and Keegan at the former's testimonial at St James's Park on Wednesday night was the one for Steve Watson's somersault throw-in. It used to be a party trick of the Aston Villa defender during competitive games in his youth for Newcastle until he was told "no more" by the then Newcastle manager Jim Smith after doing it at a League Cup tie against neighbours Middlesbrough at the old Ayresome Park, where there was room for such spectacular manoeuvres. Given Dion Dublin's aerial ability, it might be worth his while reviving the act - though banned by FIFA - at Villa Park because he finds the six-yard box with it every time.

COULD GEORGE BEST, party animal extraordinaire, be making a move from the fast lane to the slipper lounge as the years catch up with him? When a caller to his local, the Phone Arms off the Kings Road, enquired about George's whereabouts one lunchtime earlier this week, the response from a member of staff was: "Not sure where he is." When pressed on what time George might be expected in for his regular one o'clock drink, the staff member stalled for a moment and managed: "Look, he's not here." Only at the third time of asking was a fuller explanation proffered. "I know he was taking his wife out last night," came the explanation. "So I'm not sure he'll make it in today."

AS YOU WERE



PAOLO DI CANIO is the kind of bloke you can rely on, as a brief perusal of his recent history confirms. As a Celtic player, he dazzled with his feet and wasn't bad with his hands either (top left), and although he walked out on the Bhoys, the faithful still cherished his tootsies so much that someone paid £58,000 for a pair of his boots in a charity auction. The other thing about Sign-

or Di Canio is that he might appear brash and temperamental, but he's not afraid to show his sensitive side and has even, on occasion, laid himself bare for his devoted followers. Oooh, just look at the smouldering stallion (top right). How can you call him fickle? Say what you like about Paolo's time with the Owls (bottom left), but he didn't give a hoot about decorum if it

meant giving that little bit extra to improve the team's performance. He gave his all for Wednesday, he really did, but when push came to shove, he obviously felt he was a Hammer after all (bottom right). So no more doubting the poor fella, OK? He's passionate, devoted and true. And definitely not a loony time bomb on the make. Absolutely, definitely not that.

THE PRICE IS RIGHT

FA CUP? Poisoned chalice more like. West Ham, Southampton Aston Villa. Leicester, our ante-post portfolio is in tatters. Still, the fifth-round draw threw up some interesting possibilities and Arsenal (home tie, not in Europe), Leeds (ditto), Barnsley (ditto), Huddersfield (ditto) and Fulham (well in on a form line through Villa) are all worth a punt. Black-

burn v Tottenham, Coventry v Liverpool and Newcastle v Aston Villa look the prime draw candidates this weekend and let's throw in marauding Manchester United to beat cheerless Charlton tomorrow for some trebles. The London derby on Murdochvision between Arsenal and Chelsea is worth a draw single tomorrow, while larrupers Lazio can beat banal Bari on their home turf in Channel 4's Sunday Serie A treat.

THE SWEEPER'S BOOKIE-BASHING BETS

LIBERO WAGERS

Four £2 trebles with Stanley: Blackburn to draw with Tottenham (12-5); Coventry to draw with Liverpool (12-5); Newcastle to draw with Aston Villa (12-5); Man Utd to win at Charlton (8-13).

FA CUP ANTE-POST PORTFOLIO

Arsenal (£1, 9-2, Stanley & Tote), Leeds (£1, 8-1, William Hill), Barnsley (£1, 50-1, Tote), Fulham (£1, 125-1, William Hill), Huddersfield (£1, 125-1, Coral & William Hill), ORIGINAL BANK: £100. CURRENT KITTY: £146.64! TODAY'S BETS: £18.53 (inc. £1.53 tax).

MASCOT ON THE MAT

Name: Toby Tyke.
Club: Barnsley.
Appearance: A cavorting, seven foot bulldog, who rarely sticks to his job of promoting harmony between fans. Crime sheet: Enraged Manchester City fans aired their grievances to David Mellor on Six-o-Six after the dirty dog cocked his leg at them on Boxing Day 1996. When City's fans decided to exact their revenge, Toby did not help his cause by wiping his backside on a toilet roll thrown from the Kop and returning it. In mitigation, Your Honour: After seeing his side go down 2-0 at home to Manchester United, the plying pooch, alarmed at seeing the home fans' relegation-bound despondency, did his own version of the Full Monty in torrential rain. Off came his bowler hat and frock coat, leading up to the finale of mooning at a packed ORA Stand.

Other information: To look at Toby Tyke a few months ago, you'd have thought he believed in suffering for his art. Minus an ear, he was the nearest thing a mascot will be to a Van Gogh. Luckily, a few weeks' rest and a plaster quickly fixed the curtailed canine.

Paul Stevenson

MY TEAM

JIM ROSENTHAL
OXFORD UNITED

Television football commentator "I was born in the city, went to school there, worked on the local paper. There's a fad of people coming out of the woodwork saying they support a team but I can put my programmes on the table and prove my allegiance. We've always been a good cup team, as winning the Milk Cup 3-0 against QPR in 1986 showed. I covered the match for ITV and when we won I put my Oxford hat on at the end. That probably put my career back years! Lots of players come to Oxford and flourish, Matt Elliott, Ray Houghton, John Aldridge. The people who go are a very loyal bunch. It's a very special club in that respect."

IN T'NET

Found on the Web: Hoddle's cartoon England. THIS SITE provides evidence - via a South Park-style cartoon - that the England manager is an alien and that Wembley Stadium is his space ship. The site also features two games: in 'Swedish balls-up', you control Michael Owen as he attempts to head meatballs - served across the screen by Ulrika Jonsson in a bikini - into Hoddle's mouth, and in 'Kickham', you steer a Beckham lookalike around a pitch and help him trip Argentinian players while he is being distracted by Posh Spice flashing her underwear.

http://www.hoddle.com/

SEEN BUT NOT BOUGHT

NEVER HAS there been a better time for Spurs fans to nip down to White Hart Lane and stock up on night attire. The series of games against Wimbledon is so soporific a few extra pairs of pyjamas won't go amiss and the club shop can provide many options. The real bargains come in the sale though, so what better for the retiring supporter than Tottenham leather moccasin slippers, in a range of sizes, originally costing up to £14.99 per pair, but now reduced to as little as 65p a win, perhaps?

THEY'RE NOT ALL DENNIS BERGKAMP

Unsung foreign legionnaires No 24

MICHALIS VLACHOS:

The 32-year-old Athens-born player started his career with Olympiakos Piraeus before moving to AEK Athens and then on to Portsmouth. Equally at home as a defender or left-sided midfielder, Vlachos adapted quickly to the demands of English football after joining Pompey a year ago on a Bosman from the Greek giants. Obviously the European Champions' League didn't agree with him and he settled instead on the bracing English south coast and a struggle against relegation. Vlachos is very much a fans' favourite already and recently scored his first goal for the club against Huddersfield. Vlachos' hard work and cool distribution arguably saved the club from relegation last season. He was injured earlier this season but has now returned to full fitness and form.



A swift and defiant single-finger salute

UNLIKE MOST football fans who know that moment inside out, I can't remember the first time I saw my beloved Colchester United. No matter how hard I try, my memory simply refuses to offer up a romantic August afternoon, sun beaming in the sky, as we rattle five goals past a hapless Hartlepool and I fall head over heels in love with the Us. It just wasn't like that. In fact, my earliest flashback is of a tragic Friday night home game where we were beaten 1-0 by Mansfield.

We were chasing promotion in the old Fourth Division and were probably sixth in the table at the time. I'm only guessing here, but it seemed that we spent virtually all of the early 80s being sixth in the table. Mansfield took the lead half-way through the second half, much to the excitement of the hardy away fans, all 49 of them (I know

because a man next to me had counted them at half-time). But it's not the pain of their celebrations that I most remember about the match, it is the fantastic miss by our own centre-forward, Roy McDonough. With five minutes to go, Roy was one-on-one with their goalkeeper and we held our breath, ready for an equaliser. Unfortunately, the luckless McDonough stumbled in the mud, scuffed his shot wide and fell flat on his face.

Lower league fans will recognise the tragic-comedy aspect of this incident, which is why I can confess now that as the private McDonough struggled to regain his feet, I shouted: "Go on Roy, there's still another five minutes - make a name for yourself!" In response, the beleaguered striker rose slowly from the sludge, scraped the mud off his knees and in one

FAN'S EYE VIEW

COLCHESTER UNITED
BY RADIO 1 DJ STEVE LAMACQ

single movement turned towards my position on the terrace and gave me a swift and defiant single finger salute. I mention this because, in my 18 years following the Us, this is probably the most meaning-

ful exchange I've ever had with a Colchester manager (after leaving us in the mid-80s, McDonough would later return as player-manager and lead us back into the League after two years in the Conference).

The managerial situation is uppermost in our minds at the moment following the recent, sudden departure of our last boss, Steve Wignall - another former Us player who took over from George Burley (McDonough's successor) and engineered our recent escalation in fortunes, including last year's promotion to the Second Division via the play-offs.

Wignall was the backbone of our defence when I first started supporting Colchester in 1981, travelling 10 miles on the bus to home games from the tiny Essex village where I lived. I'd given up going to nearby Ipswich Town with my Dad be-

cause the Colchester Experience was more down to earth, powerful and intimate. Seeing Colchester changed my perception of football in the same way that punk and The Clash changed my entire vision of music. But that's another story.

The return of Wignall as manager brought a warm sense of continuity to my time on the Layer Road terraces - and took us to all-new adventures. We've almost been treating our time in the Second Division this season like going somewhere exciting on holiday that you'd like to move to permanently. We've seen all these places (Luton, Stoke, Manchester City... I even know one fan who has taken holiday snaps at every ground, including a picture of himself in front of the Notts County scoreboard when we were 3-1 up). But after nine games without a

win, Wignall, our tourist guide, simply put down his umbrella, folded up his notes and got off the bus, saying: "I don't feel I can take this team any further."

In his time in charge, Wignall did a grand job with little cash - Colchester are not a club rolling in money. His departure has left me in a state of turmoil. I was told the news during one of my BBC Radio 1 programmes and was barely able to speak for four records. Wignall's successor, announced this week, is Mick Wadsworth, until Thursday in charge of Scarborough. Something of an unknown quantity in Essex, his appointment may be greeted with some suspicion by the Us fans. A look at Scarborough's position in the Third Division will tell you why. Steve Lamacq presents BBC Radio 1's Lamacq Live, along with The Evening Session.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

The least enjoyable game of cricket I've ever played in. There were two sides at each other's throats. Alec Stewart, England captain, after the ill-tempered one-day game against Sri Lanka.

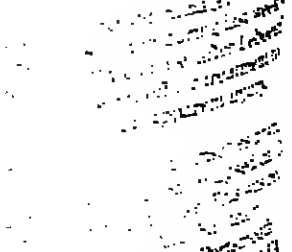
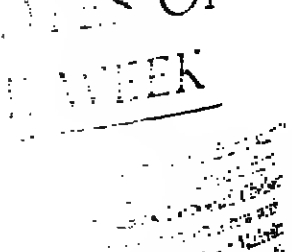
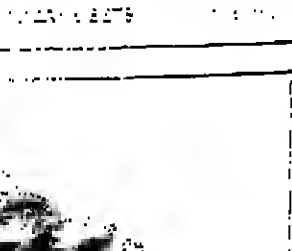
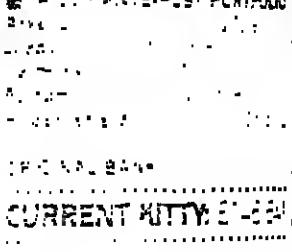
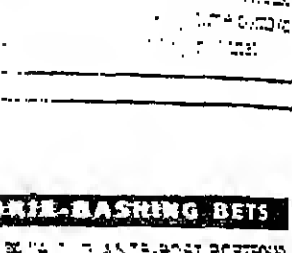
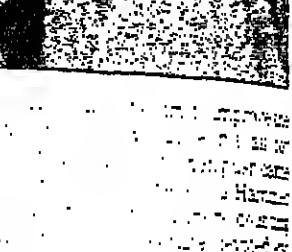
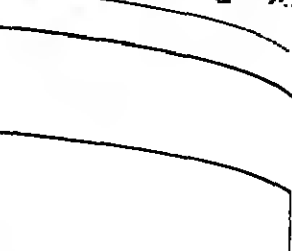
I don't have a great deal of sympathy with Stan. Stress is about the lad at Rochdale who has got three months left of his contract and a mortgage to pay. John Gregory, Aston Villa manager, on complaints about stress by his striker Stan Collymore.

Shotton called me a prick and accused me of cheating. The last time I came to Oxford I met some sensible, intelligent people at the

university. He didn't want to talk, he wanted to fight. Frank Leboeuf, Chelsea defender, on a row with Oxford manager Malcolm Shotton during last week's FA Cup tie, after Leboeuf went off for treatment to an apparent injury.

They let themselves down, capitulated, collapsed, call it what you like. This was not an Alan Ball team. Alan Ball, Portsmouth manager, after the 5-1 FA Cup defeat to Leeds.

I said I wanted us to draw them but I was only trying to look big. Chris Coleman, Fulham defender, on his side's FA Cup draw against Manchester United.



Goldberg denies attack on Venables

THE CRYSTAL Palace chairman, Mark Goldberg, has moved to distance himself from criticism of Terry Venables in which he was said to have admitted that hiring the former England coach was a mistake. Venables left his lucrative coaching post earlier this month to become a consultant to the cash-strapped club in what had seemed a pure cost-cutting move by Goldberg. However, when the Palace chairman appeared at a meeting of the Palace Independent Supporters' Association earlier this week, it initially seemed that there may have been other factors behind Venables' departure.

Goldberg was reported to have told fans: "Did I make a mistake in appointing Terry Venables? Yes, I think I did and when you make a mistake you have to turn it around. You haven't had value in the last six months and I haven't had value either. I would never have made the decision if I could start all over again."

The Palace chairman has also been quoted by *The Express* as declaring that: "The youth team is fitter than the first team and since Steve Coppell and John Cartwright have taken over the players have a greater level of fitness already. We never got into a situation where we played with the same players and the same system."

Goldberg's reported comments were clearly at odds with the truce between himself and Venables which had existed since an end was called to the coach's £750,000-a-year, five-year contract at Palace. With Venables understood to be fanning at reports of the fans' meeting, the chairman yesterday maintained that his comments had been "misrepresented".

"I deny that I have criticised Terry Venables or his management of the team," Goldberg said. "I was purely talking to the fans about the fact that our plans for the future will involve playing with more passion, fight and fitness as we need to compensate for having had to sell two players of great skill in Attilio Lombardo and Matt Jansen."

"That wasn't meant as a criticism of Terry Venables in any way. He was an asset to Crystal Palace while he was there and brought in many quality players at good value. The only mistake I admitted to was due to the financial implications of hiring in Terry, and had nothing to do with his management."

Goldberg's version of events was largely supported by leading members of the fans' group who attended Wednesday night's public meeting, with the Association chairman Andy Gilbert saying that: "Mark Goldberg did say many of those things but he was not overly critical of Terry Venables. Some of the fans were but he was admirably restrained. He admitted he was on a learning curve and that although he had brought in someone he believed was a world authority on football, it hadn't worked out."

One thing that does appear certain, however, is that Coppell, who was moved aside from coach to become director of football before Venables took over, is now seen as Palace's manager for the future. Goldberg, meanwhile, denied reports that the entire first-team squad had been put up for sale to further ease the financial problems at the club, insisting that Palace now "had time" to consider their next move.



Paolo Di Canio (left) is put through his paces yesterday by his new manager, Harry Redknapp (right), after joining West Ham this week

Sunderland on the rebound

SUCCESSIVE CUP defeats will have done little to temper the ambitions of Sunderland as the First Division leaders travel to Watford today. The Wearside's assistant manager, Bobby Saxton, is confidently predicting a positive reaction to the club's recent disappointments.

Sunderland, in rampant form in the League this season, were given some measure of their progress this season - and probably their prospects next - when they were beaten by Premier opposition, last week. Blackburn Rovers shunted them out of the FA Cup and Peter Reid's team were beaten 2-1 in the first leg of the Worthington Cup semi-final at home to Leicester on Tuesday.

However, Saxton yesterday issued a warning to the club's promotion rivals: beware of the backlash. "Ever since we went top, every other team in the division wants to beat us. It makes every game a big game," Saxton said. "We were disappointed not to win against Blackburn and Leicester - but we won't let those results bother us."

The Vicarage Road manager, Graham Taylor, sees starting similarities between the league leaders and seventh-placed Watford's zenith in the early 1980s. "Sunderland have team spirit, players who deliver the goods and who know what they're about," Taylor said. "In the 80s at Watford we didn't really have any tricks up our sleeves, but it was stopping us which the opposition found so difficult."

There will be some nostalgia but little charity at the Reebok Stadium when Bolton play host to Norwich. The Canaries manager, Bruce Rioch, returns to the club he guided into the Premiership in 1995 for the first time at their new stadium, which the former Scottish international helped to design.

"I was consulted when they were designing the stadium, so I should know my way around," Rioch said. "It's my

first time back as a manager at the Reebok but I don't feel I've got anything to prove."

Rioch's former assistant, Colin Todd, is concentrated on extending his side's 11-match unbeaten run rather than the return of the Wanderers' prodigal. "That Bruce used to manage this club has no bearing on the match," Todd said. "The issue is that we're playing against a decent team. The ball is the same as it is every other week."

Brian Horton, newly installed at Port Vale, is preparing for his first game in charge, but even after years of experience he admits he could not have asked for a more tricky opening game than the trip to fifth-placed Ipswich. "Training's

been good but it's matches that you want to be involved with and I can't wait," said Horton, whose new side are second bottom.

"But that said, I couldn't get a much tougher start. They have been one of the best in the division for two or three years now and George Burley has got a great blend between youth and experience."

There will be another reunion, perhaps less amicable, at The Hawthorns where the former West Bromwich manager, Alan Buckley, returns with Grimsby. He is, understandably, doing his best to diffuse any conflict. "It doesn't matter one bit to me. I'll tell them worry about it. All I'm concerned about is the football match."

Advocaat puts pressure on Dons

THE RANGERS manager, Dick Advocaat, yesterday questioned the attitude of the Aberdeen players on the eve of today's Premier League game between the two sides at Pittodrie.

The Dons were knocked out of their Scottish Cup last week on their own pitch by the Scottish League Second Division leaders, Livingston. They have also struggled to put a run of decent results together, with their highly-paid players being branded under-achievers.

Games between the two teams have been fiercely competitive over the years and today promises to be no different, with Rangers leading the table and Aberdeen at the wrong end. Advocaat did little

to take the heat out of the atmosphere yesterday. Aberdeen are desperate to do well against us. Maybe they should have been desperate against Livingston, because then they would have been only three or four games from winning something," he said.

"It is my view that you have to be desperate in every match if you want to win things. But we know this will be a very difficult game for us. It always has been - and they bring some quality players."

Rangers will be boosted by the return of the midfielder Giovanni van Bronckhorst after suspension, although Barry Ferguson will miss out again as he is still banned. Colin Hendry is also out with a groin injury, but the problem does not require surgery, just two weeks' rest, according to Advocaat.

Rangers gained a midweek 4-0 victory at Dundee and their new German goalkeeper, Stefan Klos, is hoping not only for another clean sheet today - but a championship medal in his first season.

Klos believes that is the only way he can establish his international credentials, having been dropped from the German squad that is setting up a training camp in Florida next

Bari face Lazio barrage

LAZIO, THE best team in Serie A at present, promise to give Bari, their southern hosts, a rough ride in tomorrow's live game on Channel 4. Lazio, beaten 3-1 by Internazionale in the UEFA Cup final last season, and favourites to relieve Chelsea of their Cup-Winners' Cup this term, went all out in the summer to assemble a side capable of winning the Scudetto. Rome's big spenders splashed out £31m to bring Christian Vieri (£19m), the Italian international striker, back to Italy from Atletico Madrid, and Marcelo Salas (£12m), the brilliant Chilean hit man, over from River Plate.

However, thanks to a plethora of early season injuries, Lazio

made a sluggish start to their campaign and Bari exploited this by going to Rome and nicking a point in a 0-0 draw in the second week of the season.

However, back to full strength, Lazio have been awesome of late. They won their sixth Serie A game on the trot when travelling to Parma to give their hosts a 3-1 beating 13 days ago, and last week Lazio made it seven on the spin with a 4-1 demolition of Piacenza at the Olympic Stadium. That left them second in the table, three points behind Fiorentina.

Lazio were beaten 5-2 16-4 on

WEEKEND FIXTURE GUIDE AND POOLS CHECK			
TODAY			
FOOTBALL			
3.0 unless stated			
FA CUP			
Premier League			
1. Blackburn v Liverpool			
2. Everton v Nottingham Forest			
3. Manchester United v Arsenal			
4. Newcastle v Aston Villa			
5. Sheffield Wednesday v Derby			
6. Southampton v Leeds			
7. Wimbledon v West Ham			
NATIONAL LEAGUE			
8. Bolton v Norwich			
9. Crewe v Sheffield United			
10. Huddersfield v Bristol City			
11. Ipswich v Port Vale			
12. Oxford v Barnsley			
13. QPR v Portsmouth			
14. Stockport v Wolverhampton			
15. Swindon v Bury			
16. Tranmere v Crystal Palace			
17. Watford v Sunderland			
18. West Bromwich v Grimsby			
SECOND DIVISION			
19. Blackpool v Macclesfield			
20. Bristol Rovers v Colchester			
21. Chesterfield v Walsley			
22. Fulham v Notts County			
23. Lincoln City v Burnley			
24. Luton v Bournemouth			
25. Millwall v Gillingham			
26. Notts County v Reading			
27. Walsley v Wigan			
28. Wigan v Walsley			
29. York v Oldham			
THIRD DIVISION			
30. Barnet v Swale			
31. Brighouse v Peterborough			
32. Cambridge Utd v Carlisle			
33. Doncaster v Bradford			
34. Exeter v Plymouth (11.0)			
35. Halifax v Rotherham			
36. Harrogate v Scunthorpe			
37. Leyton Orient v Darlington			
38. Mansfield v Chester			
39. Notts County v Scunthorpe			
40. Southend v Torquay			
41. Swale v Swale			
42. Swale v Swale			
43. Swale v Swale			
44. Swale v Swale			
45. Swale v Swale			
46. Swale v Swale			

'It is a constant battle throughout my career in keeping the balance between calm and collected but also competitive'

Second spell is sweeter for Le Saux

A CHILL day in the west London wastelands and White Van Man is out in force, parked up with the Escorts and Mondeo alongside a windswept playing field near Heathrow.

They are there to spot footballers rather than planes and there is a high-calibre collection the other side of the fence as Graham Rix puts Chelsea's multi-national squad through a practice match.

The football is better than Wednesday's snore draw between Spurs and Wimbledon in the Worthington Cup although the players' kit is unusual. Of the 22 players only five are not wearing tracksuit bottoms, woolly hats or gloves. Three are young fringe players, the others are Dennis Wise and Graeme Le Saux. "Well, hard, and a small blow for England," thinks White Van Man.

Tomorrow afternoon, when Chelsea play Arsenal at Highbury, Le Saux will again prove that, contrary to the abuse he receives from opposition supporters, there is nothing soft about him.

The Jersey-born England international has become one of the integral characters in a fixture which has prompted three red cards and 33 yellows in the last five matches and 16 months.

"They are quite lively matches," reflected Le Saux when we met over bowls of pasta, prepared by Chelsea's Italian chef, in the training ground's functional canteen on Thursday. "It is a sign of both clubs doing well, there is a lot at stake and last season (when they met in the League Cup semi-final) we played them more times than was healthy. It led to personal battles."

Le Saux's were with Lee Dixon, who was dismissed in the September meeting following two incidents with the Chelsea player. "I think on the pitch we are both quite feisty," he said. "I don't know him at all off the pitch but have known him as a player for a long time and maybe you do get a bit of history. I go and play against him knowing what I have to do to win my battle and vice versa."

"They are generally honest encounters. There is nothing particularly nasty about them: we are both competitive."

BY GLENN MOORE

Le Saux's own feistiness has attracted adverse attention although his sending-off, a fortnight later, for a spat with Blackburn's Sebastian Perez, was only his second red card and his first for nine years. That, and a minor ruckus with Paul Ince - more verbal than physical - were factors in his recent omission from the England side, yet he was recalled for the win against the Czech Republic and will be in Thursday's squad for the game with France on Wednesday week.

One theory is that Le Saux's aggression is a response to the terrace taunts, many of which question his masculinity, but the player himself discounts this. He has not changed: his and football's profile has. "The Arsenal games, for example, are big games, they are televised, it concentrates attention on them," he noted.

"When I first started playing, the main occasions I was

'I get a lot of grief [from fans], but I've always tried to look at it as a backhanded compliment'

booked was when I lost possession and chased back so hard to get the ball back that the ref would say it was a malicious tackle because the way you are going back looks aggressive. That's me being honest. I've made a mistake and I've got to get back."

This scenario will be familiar to Chelsea fans even now, and Le Saux added: "Defence is not a position where, if things are getting heated, you can back away, drift inside or change your game to suit the atmosphere. You have to stand up and face it."

"And the abuse?" "I know I get a lot of grief but I've always tried to look at that as a backhanded compliment - they wouldn't single me out if I was a bad player - that's what you have to say (to yourself). There are times when the game's stopped and you hear things and you just have to ignore it."

As a young player I wanted to play up to the crowd because you are all part of the same experience but sometimes it is so offensive it is not worth recognising they are there. They go on about kicking racism out of the game but when you hear some of the things said in front of children you think, 'what hope is there?'

"But I don't think it shapes the way I play. I've always been like that. It is a constant battle I'll have throughout my career in keeping the balance between being cool, calm and collected but also competitive."

He then provided an example of an early failure to find that balance. "My dad would tell you that when I was a kid in Jersey we would go to the beach in summer and there was a cafe about half a mile from our spot. We would go off and get an ice cream, my older sister, my dad and I, and we used to run there. They were obviously quicker than me - I was about three and my sister five - and if they got too far ahead I used to have a tantrum because I couldn't physically keep up."

"If you don't have that drive and ambition I don't think you can get to the top of this profession. That's what gets to me, when people make flippant remarks about footballers and money. They assume we are only in it for the money but proper players would play irrespective. It is a great advantage and we wouldn't turn it down but you don't sit in the dressing-room thinking this match will earn me 'X' thousand pounds; you go out to win the game."

"I earned virtually nothing for four to five years. I lived in digs, didn't have a car, I didn't think anything of it. I'm grateful for not having had everything on a plate. Now I have reasonable values and hopefully am socially aware and can integrate with people without feeling better than some or worse than others."

With respect to the rest of his profession, not many footballers would describe themselves as "socially aware" and Le Saux has always had to live with the tag of being an "intellectual" among footballers. This led to his being largely



Chelsea's Graeme Le Saux tomorrow revives his tempestuous rivalry with Arsenal's Lee Dixon - 'They are quite lively matches'

Peter Jay

ostracised in his first spell at Chelsea - though the example of Pat Nevin showed him he could be his own man - and coloured some relationships at Blackburn.

He seems much more at home in the modern Chelsea's polyglot dressing-room and admits the camaraderie will be one thing he will miss when he gives up playing.

That will not be for a few years yet and, though management is unlikely, he is

undecided whether to play on down the leagues, stay in football in another capacity, or go into the media. The latter would seem quite likely and he has done some journalistic work, including a ghosted column for The Sun, which seemed an odd choice for a reader of liberal broadsheets.

In response to my question why, he could have talked about wanting to reach the masses and later mentions the need to keep his name in

currency - the deal was agreed during a long and career-threatening ankle injury - but the honesty he referred to earlier resurfaces as he admits, sheepishly: "Yes, I'm a hypocrite. It was for the money. I felt I could justify it to an extent but it was a tough decision. I hope I have values and I went home and thought, 'I don't feel good about this.' I never felt I sold my soul. I got on well professionally with the guy who wrote it and I wasn't scan-

dalous and didn't slaughter people, but I always felt a bit uncomfortable."

Though a good talker, comfortable with the self-analysis involved, Le Saux's mind is now turning to this central London home where, his month-old baby, Georgina, waits with Mariana, his wife. Fatherhood is supposed to calm people down, which may come in handy tomorrow.

"We've been a little bit lucky against Coventry and Oxford,"

noted Le Saux of Chelsea's last two games, "but you have to take something from it and the fact we can have a poor game and still look reasonably tight is encouraging. We are more resilient this year and that is the difference between us this year and in recent years."

A 21-match unbeaten Premiership run is testimony to that, as are the white vans parked up in hope and admiration on Sipson Lane. Will they still be there in May?

Villa challenge 'in good shape' Bobby should never Kop the blame again

THERE HAVE been some very good weeks in John Gregory's life as manager of Aston Villa, but the last has not been one of them. As Tommy Docherty once opined during a spell of turbulence: "If it wasn't for the League table there would be no fun at all."

To lose a striker was bad enough, but Stan Collymore was not the only person at Villa Park feeling shocked and depressed. There was also the little matter of the 30,000 or so with home allegiance who watched the team being bundled out of the FA Cup by Second Division Fulham.

Perversely though, both events might prove to be blessings come May. The first refuge of a beaten Cup manager is the freedom to concentrate on the League and as Villa are joint top of the Premiership that is no mere trifle.

Collymore's stress, too, at least eases the selection conundrum of trying to accommodate him, Dion Dublin, Paul Merson and Julian Joachim into two forward places. As Chelsea's Gianluca Vialli has found out since his dropped like decision about strikers makes life a lot easier.

Villa need to make the most of the silver linings because a scan of their fixture list reveals they are entering a crucial phase of the season. They have to put as much daylight as they can between themselves and rivals still embroiled in Europe and domestic cup competitions because they have a tough finish to the season.

Their last three away fixtures are at Liverpool, Manchester United and Arsenal. They might win them all, but it

BY GUY HODGSON

would be more comforting for the club if they have such a points advantage that draws would do. Today Villa go to Newcastle, where three points would throw down a challenge to United, Arsenal and Chelsea, a trio who do not play until tomorrow. To do so, however, would be to buck a trend.

"It has always been a difficult place for us to get points," Gregory said. "When we won at home in September it was the first time we'd beaten Newcastle in a Premiership match, so that gives you an idea of the problems we've had."

"But regardless of what has happened off the field this

week, we're in good shape. In the last six Premiership matches we've won four, drawn one and got somewhat cheated at Blackburn, where we had to play with 10 men. Thirteen points out of the last 18 is championship form and we just need to reproduce that for the last 16 matches."

Against that Gregory ought to be aware that Villa have not won at St James's Park in any of the seven seasons they have won the championship.

Wimbledon play in another London derby today, but before the rest of the nation yawns Tottenham are not the opponents at Selhurst Park. The fresh faces are West Ham, who are rapidly becoming unfamiliar to

their fans given the way Harry Redknapp is altering his squad.

Mixed messages have been emanating from Upton Park over whether Paolo Di Canio will start, but Marc-Vivien Foé will be the delight of headline writers everywhere. Expect a series of friend and foe screams from now on, particularly as Wimbledon include the former Hammer John Hartson.

"John will be a handful," said Redknapp, who sold him for £7.5m two weeks ago. "But I'm sure he'll be the first to shake my hand at the finish." If Hartson can remove them from Eyal Berkovic's neck, of course.

Liverpool suffered more than they deserved when the Theatre of Dreams turned into

an FA Cup nightmare last Sunday, and their list of recuperative destinations would not have included Coventry.

They have won only one Premiership match at Highfield Road, although it would be a brave man to stake much on that because both teams are as predictable as the weather.

At least Liverpool score goals, which is not something you can accuse Everton of. OK, it is becoming a cliché to be-moan the lack of action at Goodison Park, but it comes to something when the home crowd moans when the fourth official signals a number bigger than "one" for added time.

At least today there is hope they can improve on their home goals tally of three as visitors Nottingham Forest have shipped them at the rate of more than two a game on their travels. Then again Everton have gone 239 minutes without a Premiership goal and guess who are just below them on 216?

Southampton, walloped 7-1 at Liverpool last time, will have more than one club looking if they beat Leeds at The Dell, while Blackburn will be embellished by the debuts of Matt Jansen and Jason McAteer against Tottenham.

Tomorrow Arsenal meet Chelsea in a high-pressure match that is not expected to improve either of their poor disciplinary records while Charlton, who ended an eight-match losing run with a 2-3 draw against Newcastle, play host to Manchester United.

United have lost their last two League visits to Charlton and their last win there was in August 1967.

I'LL TELL you what's hugging a lot of Liverpoolians about the defeat at Old Trafford on Sunday. Strange as it may seem, it's got nothing to do with the savage twist of fate which robbed us of victory at the death. It's not even that it was United who provided it. No, quite simply, it's the fact that Phil Babb was suspended and missed the game.

I'm not joking. What it meant was there was nobody upon whom they could heap all the blame. Normally they just rant and rave at poor old Bobby for everything that goes wrong. Surely, you've all seen a copy of the script, by now.

"What a sinner Fowler missed!" "Yeah, but it wasn't his fault, was it? Didn't you see the way Babb was stood on the half-way line as Robbie was about to shoot? Enough to put anybody off."

"Yeah, I noticed that too. Scratching his head wasn't he?" "Yeah. The pillock. Cost us the game, that scratch."

And that is usually that. Robbie off the hook. Scapegoat confirmed. Everyone appeased. Still spiritually wrecked, mind. But appeased, none the less. So, what about Sunday, then? Who was to blame in the absence of Bobby? Who is destined to touch for the scapegoat role, this time?

Well, if you ask me, I say nobody, no one at all. Not Gérard for failing to bring on McManis to help us procure vital possession. Not our apparent death wish after half-time to give the ball away repeatedly to a red shirt. Not even the referee for his

Alan Edge longs for the return of a sadly-missed Anfield tradition

David Copperfield illusion of a foul by Redknapp which turned the whole game on its head. Not even that piece of nonsense.

You see, I believe it's time for a radical departure from all this recrimination business. Let's get back to the good old bad old days, I say. Those times when a crumpled Kop could take defeat with wit and humour.

We didn't need scapegoats back then. We took it all on the chin. Take Bobby, for a kick-off. Years ago, the guy would have been transformed into a folk hero. We'd have unfurled a banner which read: "Bobby made the Swiss roll over laughing, tripped over the Frogs' legs and now he's munching a Spanish Omelette". The same with the opposition. We'd have made sure that, where due, we would lavish them with praise and applause. Especially if they had deserved their victory over us. Like United did.

Because, let's face it, they did. No matter how valiantly Liverpool fought. No matter that, for huge chunks of the game, they were at least the equals of United. No matter that Jamie Carragher proved himself to be as good as any central defender in the Premiership or that, with Rigobert Song alongside him and playing a 4-4-2 system with Macca roving in midfield, we could yet sneak that title. The simple fact is, on this occasion, United, great FA Cup side that they are, showed the sort of never-say-die spirit Liverpool used to display (and,

encouragingly, are showing signs of again). In the final analysis, that will win meant United deserved their good fortune.

Now it hurts me to write that previous sentence. The point is, though, I'm simply following my football education. That, you see, is the way the Kop of years ago would have seen it. To have given credit where it was due no matter how much it hurt. That was simply the way they did it. Such occasions have passed into Anfield folklore. Chelsea in 1966, Ferencváros in 1968, Leeds in 1969, Red Star in 1973, right up to Arsenal in 1989. Boy were we all sick after those defeats. Massive stakes, crushing defeats. It made no difference. The Kop would always rise above the disappointment, even the loss of a League title, to cheer their opponents with a rare magnanimity.

And do you know what? Each time we did so, we all felt enriched. It was like having a good cry. A means of unburdening yourself. Even though you felt completely dispirited, there was still a stirring sense of pride which seemed to sustain you until the next time.

In fact, this little nostalgic trip is making me feel a bit that way right now about Sunday's defeat. I just wish to God, though, it could have been against anybody else other than those bastards.

Alan Edge is the author of *Faith of Our Fathers, Football as a Religion*.


		PREMIERSHIP TABLE										Next	Upcoming
		Pts	GD	W	L	D	F	A	W	L	D		
1	Chelsea	22	+16	7	4	0	17	6	4	5	1	17	12
2	Aston Villa	21	+14	8	2	1	22	12	4	5	2	12	8
3	Man Utd	22	+13	6	3	1	31	13	3	5	2	18	13
4	Arsenal	22	+12	6	5	0	15	4	4	4	3	8	7
5	Leeds	22	+16	7	3	1	20	5	2	6	3	16	15
6	Liverpool	22	+17	6	3	2	28	13	4	2	5	15	13
7	Wimbledon	22	+4	7	3	1	18	11	2	4	5	11	22
8	West Ham	22	-6	6	3	2	16	14	3	2	6	9	17
9	Blackburn	22	-1	4	6	1	16	10	3	4	4	16	18
10	Derby	22	+1	4	5	2	11	9	3	5	3	11	11
11	Tottenham	22	-2	5	4	2	19	16	2	4	5	9	10
12	Leicester	22	-2	5	3	3	17	16	2	5	4	8	11
13	Sheff Wed	22	-6	3	3	3	13	5	2	2	7	12	16
14	Newcastle	22	-5	5	3	2	14	14	1	5	5	12	17
15	Exeter	21	-11	2	7	2	3	5	3	2	6	10	19
16	Blackburn	22	-1	5	2	4	13	11	4	4	7	8	18
17	Coventry	22	-10	4	4	3	15	12	1	1	9	6	19
18	Charlton	22	-10	2	4	4	15	12	1	4	7	11	24
19	Southampton	22	-16	3	2	6	15	21	1	3	7	5	25
20	Nottn Forest	22	-13	1	6	4	9	13	1	1	9	9	28

WEEKEND REVIEW

COMMENT • ARTS & BOOKS • COUNTRY & GARDEN • TRAVEL



**FERGAL KEANE
ON THE CRISIS
IN YEMEN**
COMMENT, PAGE 3



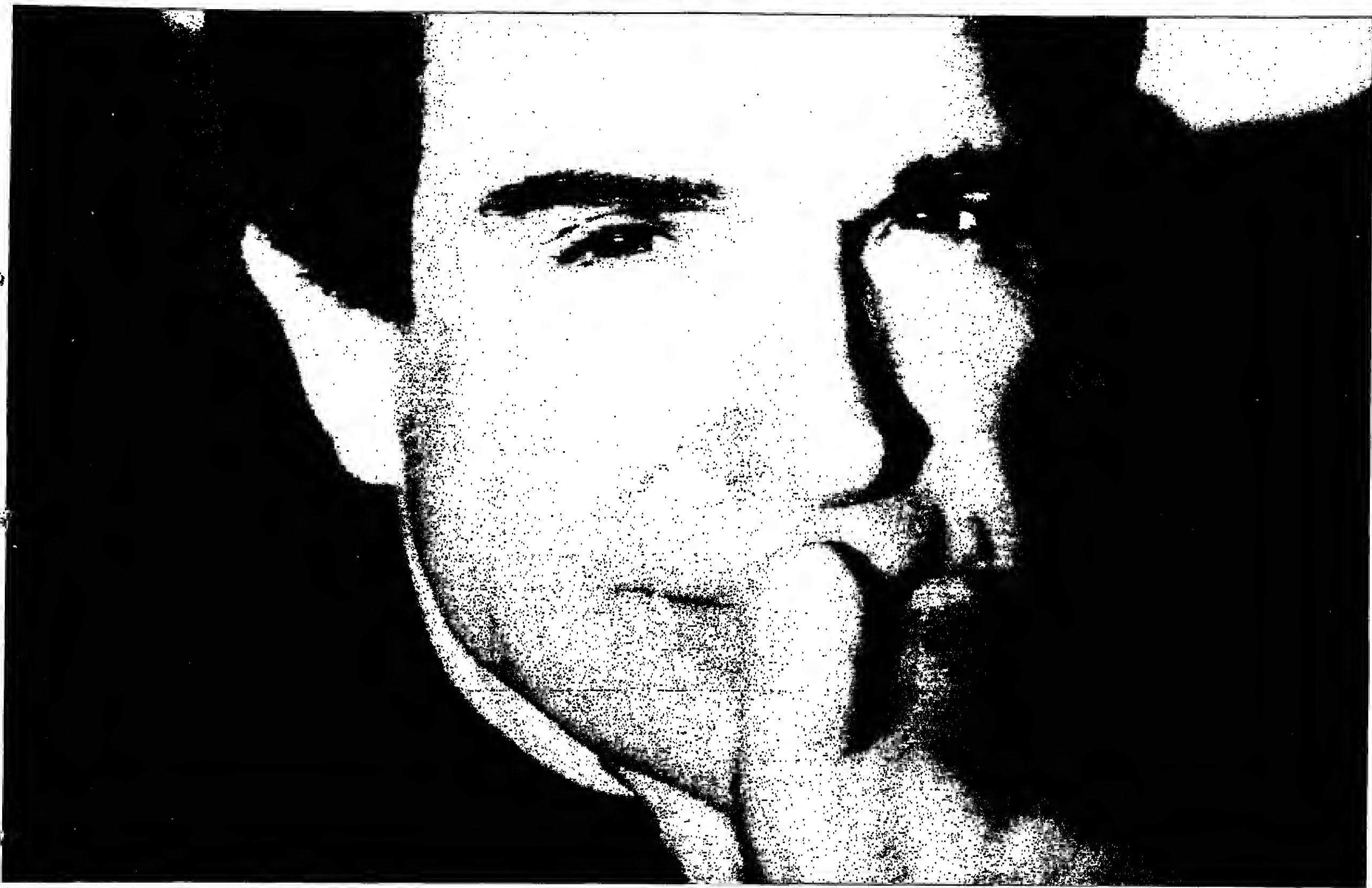
**THE LAST
DAYS OF ELVIS
PRESLEY**
BOOKS, PAGE 14



**ARE WE WRONG
TO LOVE
THE BADGER?**
COUNTRY, PAGE 18



**OFF THE
BEATEN TRACK
IN MOROCCO**
TRAVEL, PAGE 20



The Beatty myth

He's got the looks, the talent, the liberal credentials. And he appears to think that what the world needs now... is sex. At 60, can Warren Beatty still believe his own propaganda?

HI, I'm Warren," says the man with the thick, greying hair, putting out a hand to shake mine, as if I wouldn't recognise that face, shrunk down from the posters and the movie screens. Warren Beatty is in town to promote his new film, *Bulworth*, and everywhere he goes he carries the weight of movie stardom with him.

I was surprised to find that I liked the film – a romp through American politics, starring Beatty as a senator who has a nervous breakdown and starts telling the truth, in rhyme. But what now surprises me more is to find that I like the man, who has been a star longer than I have been alive, but who still has an energy that keeps breaking through his cagey interview responses. Of course, he's deliberately turning on his famous charm – he listens intently into your eyes as he answers, and expresses great interest in what you think – but the kind of enthusiasm he reveals for political ideas and the idea of being a pose, when it has shaped his life.

Beatty started his film career as a beautiful young boy whom the camera and the audience couldn't help but adore. I've read interviews in which he compares the way he was in 1961 to Leonardo DiCaprio now, but, frankly, can you even begin to imagine DiCaprio deciding to produce a film like *Bonnie and Clyde*, as Beatty did in 1967? That was Beatty's own project. He found the script, he got it made, and it's still one of the most memorable films of its era, an unsettling, sexy cross between French New Wave and American gangster movies.

Eight years later, he went out on the edge again to produce and star in *Shampoo*, and six years after that he hustled all over Hollywood to produce *Reds*, the ambitious, if mushy, drama about Communism that was to bring him an Oscar for best director. Now, after a run of more middle-of-the-road films, he's

gone right back into the fray, at the age of 61, with *Bulworth*. "I think it's the best movie I've ever made," he says proudly. "And I've got a lot of reinforcement for that, because that's what the reviews of the movie are saying."

Together with his blistering self-confidence, Beatty has exactly the kind of modulated voice, with gravelly low notes and long, dying cadences, that a movie star should have. He sits very still, in his black sweater and trousers and black leather Gucci jacket, and holds your gaze as he speaks. But although he seems pretty self-important in person, in *Bulworth* he lets rip and invites you to laugh at him.

Bulworth is an extraordinary film, continually teetering on the verge of self-parody, as the old white senator breaks down, breaks out and starts dressing and talking like a young black man. Jump-

BY NATASHA WALTER

ing from jobs to jobs, it gradually builds into a fierce political lecture. Because Beatty, who campaigned once upon a time for Bobby Kennedy and then for George McGovern and then Gary Hart, is now angry with American politics: "I think the process now has become one in which, if someone wants to win an election, he can't lead, he must follow, because the technological means are such that you're gaining so much demographic information so quickly you just have to follow it, and do it as adroitly and attractively as possible – and I think basically," he pauses for a beat, "that's a bunch of bullshit."

In *Bulworth*, Beatty finds a way of expressing the gap between politics and real life partly by displaying the weird dissonance between political discourse – "We stand at the threshold of a new millennium," Bulworth's speeches begin – and street speech. It's a lovely conceit, as the senator bursts into patches of rap when he should be delivering crafted soundbites, even if the sight

of Beatty rapping is sometimes hard to take.

"It wasn't hard to do," Beatty says. "It would have been a terrible mistake to try to rap well, so you aim for doggerel and you try to make it funny."

Bulbush movie-goers are used to seeing political satire in the mainstream, so maybe it won't strike people here how very odd it is that *Bulworth* got made in America now. Beatty explains that it's not a film he could have imagined making if it hadn't been for the fact that he was handed a weird, once-in-a-lifetime – even for him – opportunity. "Because of some complexities in earlier dealings with Fox, I was able to settle a lawsuit with them by doing this movie with them, on the agreement that I had complete artistic control and they have complete marketing control," he says slowly.

In other words, because Fox had pulled out of *Think Tracy*, Beatty could have sued them, but he didn't, because he wanted them to agree to do this film instead. And, although he told Fox the bare bones of the story at the outset (a man gets very depressed, calls his wife a bitch and gets himself killed, then talks to her and tries to call off the contract), he didn't get round to telling them at first that the man would be a senator, and that the film would spend most of its energy exploring his disaffection with politics. Would Fox ever have agreed to it if he hadn't manoeuvred so smartly? "I think it would have been awkward for a corporation of that magnitude to make a movie with someone as attention-getting as I am, that basically says that big corporations are the greatest threat to our democracy," he replies.

When Beatty as Bulworth breaks out of the political cage, he not only starts rapping, he also starts hanging out with young black women. The sight of the 60-year-old Beatty getting on down with the 26-year-old black actress Halle Berry is something that will make a lot of movie-goers smirk. I tell him that I think he should have cast an older woman as his love interest. I'm tired

Continued on page 2

Why Not Be A Freelance Journalist?

As a freelance journalist you can have an exciting and financially rewarding career. A recent survey shows that freelancers can earn up to £40,000 a year writing for newspapers, magazines, trade and technical publications, TV and radio.

Freelancing means you are your own boss with the freedom to work when and where you please. You can be either a full-time career journalist selling your services to the highest bidder or a part-timer submitting the occasional article to earn an extra income. It's up to you to decide how far you go. Plus, if you want to work on staff freelancing is a great way to gain the necessary journalistic experience.

To succeed as a freelance journalist – on whatever level – training is essential. Our first-class home-study freelance journalism course – with personal tuition – gives you all the training you need. Professional journalists and writers show you how to write articles, features, reviews etc. that editors pay for. You are advised on style, content, presentation, copyright, ethics, law, HOW TO SELL YOUR WRITING in the UK and around the world, how to get a staff job and much more.

For an extra income or an exciting new career this is the place to start. Ideal for beginners! Earn while you learn. 15 day trial. Full refund guarantee if not successful. Details FREE. No obligation. Call NOW!

Freephone 24hrs Please quote ref: AFJ3019
0800 298 7008

Please send me details of how I can become a successful freelance journalist.
Name
Address

Post code
The Writers Bureau College of Journalism
Freeport AFJ3019, Manchester M1 8DJ

INSIDE	Letters	2	Arts	12-13	Miscellany	28-29	NINE PAGES OF TRAVEL
	Leaders and comment	3-7	Books	14-16	Sunday TV	30	
	Features	8-9	Country & Garden	17-18	Radio	31	
	Obituaries	10-11	Travel	19-27	Today's TV	32	

TOMORROW IN
THE INDEPENDENT
ON SUNDAY
REVIEWJarvis Cocker talks
to Joan Smith
about his 'Outsider Art'Why Americans fear
death by anthrax

REAL LIFE

Confessions of a nun:
'What do I miss? Trashy
magazines and sex'

CULTURE

Is our film critic the
only man in Britain
who doesn't like
'Shakespeare In Love'?
PLUS
Life with Jacqueline du Pré
- by her char

Staten Island Ferry No 6: Tourists stand at the stern as the boat leaves Manhattan

Edward Webb

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, London E14 5DL and include a daytime telephone number, fax to 0171 293 2056 or e-mail to letters@independent.co.uk (e-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address). Letters may be edited for length and clarity

Off the road

Sir: Deborah Orr rightly concludes that drastically curbing private car use in urban areas is essential in tackling pollution and other traffic problems ("A new line in hypocrisy", 29 January). But this needn't be as painful as she implies, as long as we avoid equating the solution to car-dependency with "improved public transport". Better buses, trains and trams are essential. But most new car travel is not former public transport travel. While public transport travel has fallen by about 40 per cent since the 1950s, car and van use has grown over 1,000 per cent. And many of these new, longer car trips are not easily done on conventional public transport. Improved walking and cycling conditions are also urgently needed. But, however good public transport, walking and cycling become, they cannot match the "service quality" provided by the family car.

A car is like the ultimate Swiss Army Knife - a multi-purpose household tool combined in attractive, shiny packaging. People will give up this tool, but only if they are offered others which do the same jobs.

This means radical expansion of home delivery services, safe routes for school travel, improved local taxis, neighbourhood car-sharing co-ops, part-year car hire and a host of similar services.

Such services will not develop in earnest until private car use is deliberately curbed. So come on, Mr Prescott, curb the car and set us free.
BEN PLOWDEN
Director
The Pedestrians Association
London EC1

Sir: Deborah Orr is right to comment on the commuting journeys made by some senior administrators and their staff. However, she misses the real point.

The matter that should be discussed is not the method of transport that they select but that the trip is made in the

first place. An organisation as well funded and resourced as the Environmental Agency should be able to find a sufficiently trained and experienced chauffeur for its chairman living within, say, five miles of the Millbank Tower in London.

The chairman of that august agency, surely a very busy man, should be able to find accommodation within the same distance of his place of work. If he cannot, then within the City of Westminster and its neighbourhood are a number of highly qualified and well connected people who could take that job on.

The chairman is, after all, responsible for the environment, and the environment is best protected by the reduction in the number and length of journeys made, not just changing the method of travel.
DAVID J HUNT
Tadley, Hampshire

Unfair to men

Sir: How grateful I am not to be a patient of Dr Brimblecombe (letter, 28 January). As a male GP I have faced all the problems she so vividly describes, but in the next consultation, I am faced with a nervous, embarrassed late-middle-aged man who has suffered from erectile problems for some years, who is frankly terrified or plainly turned off by vacuum pumps and penile injections, but who has finally plucked up courage to broach the subject with someone professional who he feels will treat him sympathetically and non-judgementally.

I wonder if Dr Brimblecombe has paused to consider what message the Government's decision to set down limits to the availability of Viagra on the NHS sends out to men in this country. As their wives and girlfriends trail in to the surgery in their droves for smears, well-woman checks, HRT, mammography and osteoporosis screening, men are dying prematurely in their thousands from heart disease, and yet here is the Government offering them

yet another slap in the face, saying their health needs don't matter.

If rationing is an attempt to be fair to all, then the Government might start by looking at how much is spent on men compared with women, and ask themselves if the difference reflects true differences in male versus female mortality.
KEVAN TUCKER
Fence, Lancashire

Sir: Whilst a retired doctor in my 60s I had come to accept impotence as part of normal ageing.

Soon afterwards, widowed and enjoying a new relationship, the bogey of erectile dysfunction confronted me again. After psychiatric counselling, a trial of the latest new remedy, still unlicensed in the UK, proved unhelpful.

Later, a uroandrogologist established organic causation amenable to treatment. He recommended androgen replacement. Testosterone on its own failed to restore potency. Next, painful injections into the penis of another costly remedy, freely available under the NHS, proved too repugnant to tolerate.

The latest reputedly "magic" cure became available eventually to nominated specialists. Before prescribing it, my uroandrogologist sought psychiatric reassurance about the relationship with my wife. Before our joint appointment, Viagra became freely available abroad.

Tablets bought over the counter in Switzerland and taken in a low dose restored normal potency immediately, after 15 years' impotence. The benefits to the remarriage of a retired doctor in his early 70s and his pre-menopausal wife do not need to be spelt out.

The uroandrogologist recommended continuation of hormone replacement plus Viagra and the joint prescription was implemented by my GP. Later, having studied official advice, she felt bound to discontinue the Viagra: it

seemed that the androgen could continue to be prescribed, but Viagra should be sought privately.

I sought reconsideration of her decision and, after reviewing my extensive specialist investigations, she resumed NHS prescription of testosterone with Viagra, pending the Health Minister's advice and the BMA's response.

It is anomalous that a joint NHS prescription, demonstrated as curative for a seemingly irremediable organic condition, is apparently to become impermissible once again, unless the proposed "list" is reviewed sensibly and promoted on an advisory basis. It should not deny doctors the right to exercise clinical discretion individually.
NAME AND ADDRESS
SUPPLIED

Sir: Stephen Hill (letter, 28 January) is missing the point. The issue is not how often our fellow citizens "should" have sex, but how often (if at all) the rest of us should pay for them to have it.
JANET RUSSELL
Tollesbury, Essex

Free the hens

Sir: I was pleased to read Nicholas Schoon's article outlining the cruelty inherent in battery farming and urging the Government to take the lead in securing a ban ("Assault and battery", 27 January).

The RSPCA has been campaigning for many years for an end to the battery cage system and for clear, mandatory labelling on eggs so that consumers know exactly how they have been produced.

Last year we commissioned a Mori survey which showed that 77 per cent of shoppers were prepared to pay more for free-range eggs, while 89 per cent of people believed that eggs produced from hens living in battery cages should be labelled as such.

Freedom Food, the RSPCA's own food welfare

labelling scheme, only endorses free range and barn systems that employ high welfare standards devised and monitored by the society. The huge success of the scheme is proof of the public's growing demand for welfare-friendly products and demonstrates that such alternative systems are financially viable.

The future of the egg industry rests with consumers. To help remove the battery cage, shoppers must vote with their purses.
PETER DAVIES
Director General
RSPCA
Horsham, West Sussex

Blair's choice

Sir: The Prime Minister's choice for his daughter of a high-achieving school seven miles from his home is very much a matter of public interest in the light of the difficulties many parents face at this time of year ("Blair protests to PCC about school story", 25 January).

As a Catholic parent in a borough where the Labour-controlled authority has decided to discontinue funding 70 places for Catholic children at a high-achieving school seven miles from my home and outside the borough I am fascinated by the story. The effect will be to deny a significant number of children a Catholic education, a choice which the Blairs apparently hold precious. As a resident of a borough where a selective 11-plus system is retained but under threat due to government legislation I also note that the Prime Minister's daughter had allegedly taken some form of test to assess her ability.

He has made pragmatic and understandable efforts to attain the best education for his children in the state system. Many parents strive to do the same. To pretend that in some way his choice signifies a commitment to state education is unpalatable. Only when we have "education, education, education" for all children, regardless of wealth and

social background, in a system which respects the able, can his own views and his party's policies be respected.
PETER MONAGHAN
Manchester

Loo role

Sir: Malcolm Jackson (letter, 29 January) misses the point about toilet cleaning.

The New Man can clean as many toilets, change as many nappies, vacuum as many floors or cook as many meals as he wants, but sooner or later the Old Woman will come along and say it's not good enough because only a woman can do these things properly.

And do you have a problem with that?
GEOFF THOMASON
Stockport, Cheshire

IN BRIEF

Sir: Surely there is no secret about "the real basis on which a British Cabinet will decide our entry into the euro" ("End this insulting culture of secrecy", 28 January)? It is the answer to the question, "Will entry win or lose us the next election?"
CHRISTINE ROE
York

Sir: I enjoyed the picture of steelpladers outside Annabel Elliot's 50th birthday party (Front page, 29 January). I now look forward, in the course of time, to your coverage of the funeral of the 18th Earl of Strathmore's great aunt.
The Rev FETER KETTLE
London SW19

Sir: British Summer Time ended last year about seven weeks before the winter solstice. Why do we have to endure GMT until 28 March? If we must be subjected to it, why can't GMT end seven weeks after the solstice, at the end of next week? Daylight hours will be the same as they were when BST ended in the autumn.
Mrs SUSAN CHESTERS
Winchester

'He believes sex is not just fun. It's the answer'

The Beatty myth

Continued from page one
of seeing ageing stars like himself, Robert Redford, Clint Eastwood and Woody Allen, thinking they can still play sex gods. Can't he come to terms with his age?

"I could have done you a very interesting film about me and a woman who's 45 or 55 or 60," he says defensively. "But that wasn't the story here. Here, the fact that you've got an old white guy and a young black woman is the point. I don't think anyone can be left with the feeling that this is an ideal couple - it's a real mismatch. It's

meant to be." At least the film is honest about the age gap. "How old do you think I am?" Bulworth asks Berry on screen. "Sixty," she flashes back. But that doesn't stop her going in for the clinch.

It makes you smirk, because as much as Beatty is known for being a great actor and an interesting director, he's also known, of course, for his sex life. (Woody Allen once said that if he were reincarnated, he would come back as Warren Beatty's fingertips.) In any interview with him you'll hit a list, at some point, that goes something like this: Julie Christie, Diane Keaton, Brigitte Bardot, Madonna, Elle Macpherson, Isabelle Adjani...



Generation gap: Berry and Beatty

"You get slapped a lot, but you get fucked a lot too," is how Beatty reputedly describes his wayward approach to matters of the heart in Peter Biskind's book *Easy Riders, Raging Bulls*. A man who sleeps with so many women - although he has now settled down with the actor Annette Bening and their three children - might be assumed to be boringly sexist. But his films don't just frame pretty faces, they give women good roles - even *Bonnie and Clyde* gives Faye Dunaway a curiously independent, sassy voice: Reds gave Diane Keaton the meatiest part as the writer and feminist Louise Bryant. And in *Bulworth*, Halle Berry is partly just the gorgeous girl

at the club, but also the articulate woman who surprises both Bulworth and the audiences by delivering a long, complicated peroration when asked why there aren't any black leaders any more. "Can you handle that?" she finishes, and Bulworth's eyes gleam.

Like the real Seventies man that he is, Beatty seems to believe that sex is not just fun, it's also the answer. He believes that the Clinton-Lewinsky affair will now have a good effect. "I think the eventual fall-out from this farce will be that it will no longer be possible for America to return to the sexual puritanism of the past," he says. "If there is a lowering of sexual puritanism,

maybe that will positively affect the divorce rate in the US, which is the highest in the world. I think the sacrificial lambs in this process are the President and people in the public eye who have been pilloried for their sexual foolishness. Many of whom," he winds up, "are friends of mine. And some of whom are me." He giggles. As Bulworth, Beatty puts the same answer to America's racial problems: "Everyone has got to keep fucking each other till we're all the same colour."

You can mock the sentiment, or sympathise, but you get the feeling that Beatty, with his "make love, not war" optimism, is now out of his time.

THE INDEPENDENT

1 CANADA SQUARE, CANARY WHARF, LONDON E14 5DL TELEPHONE: 0171 293 2000 OR 0171 345 2000 FAX: 0171 293 2435 OR 0171 345 2435
THE INDEPENDENT ON THE INTERNET: WWW.INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Talk of regulating the global economy is wrong, Mr Brown

THE CHANCELLOR of the Exchequer has a plan, and he is trying to drum up support for it in Davos at the regular big-picture talk-fest of the world's finance ministers. He wants to "do something" about the instability of global financial markets. It must be hoped that one of his fellow ministers will adopt the role of Canute, take him to a dealing-floor in Zurich and demand that the traders desist from panicking, wild fluctuation and overshooting.

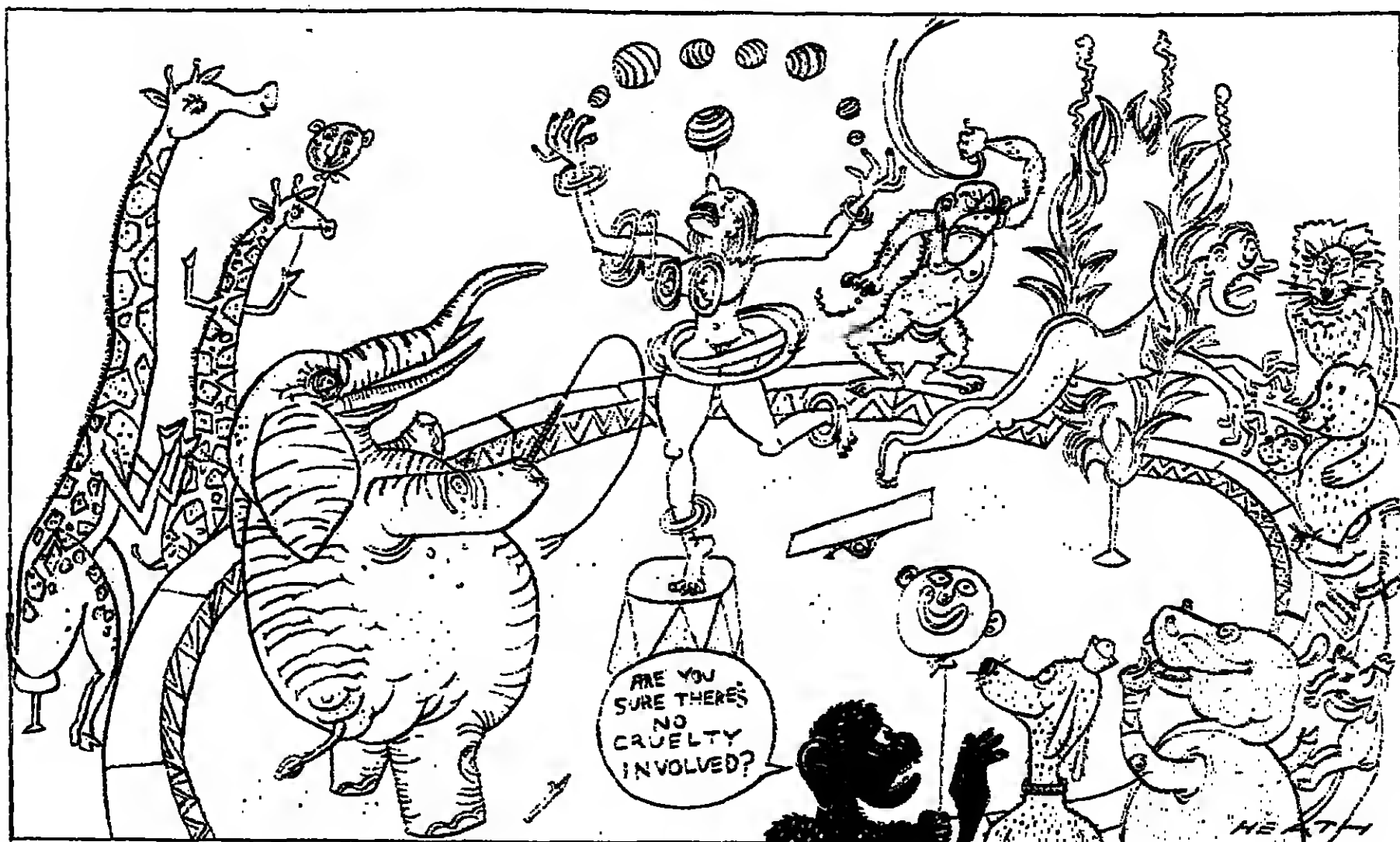
When Mr Brown's plan is analysed, however, it turns out to have little substance beyond urging governments, central banks and the IMF to insist on greater "transparency" in financial markets - which is just as well. Transparency is the latest buzz-word, meaning markets should be open and based on full information so that the authorities can react quickly to any signs of trouble. Vague talk of a global financial regulator will probably mean a committee of the global great and good to talk about Very Important Things, while suggestions for a global "lender of last resort" mean beefing up the IMF's resources. Mr Brown is in favour of virtue, and against sin. Any more substance than that would be dangerous.

The increasing integration of the world economy, a process known loosely, and on the whole rather unhelpfully, as "globalisation", is something that touches on all our lives, and it is right that our politicians should be struggling to come to terms with it. Indeed, one of Mr Brown's great achievements has been to reverse entirely the Labour Party's isolationist economic policy.

So it is disappointing that he should fall prey to the temptation so often laid before politicians of wanting to be seen to be "doing something" about things about which nothing can - or should - be done. He should declare clearly that mega-mergers, such as Ford's takeover of Volvo, should not alarm us. It would not matter if, as predicted, there were soon to be just six mass car producers in the world; local markets would still be highly competitive, and the structure of the industry has changed, with the making of parts contracted out to a vast network of small, competitive companies.

And he should reject any idea of trying to regulate the flow of money around the world. There has been far too much excitement among old leftists - such as those of *Marxism Today*, who resurrected themselves last year for a one-off blast against the Labour Government - over the apparent recantation of one free-market economist who was influential with New Labour: Paul Krugman of MIT wrote last year of the need for developing countries to impose capital controls in order to defend themselves from "self-filling speculative attacks" on their currencies. But that can be effective only in the short-term of terms. Most countries today need capital investment from outside, and cutting themselves off from world markets is damaging. Equally, while markets may overshoot, governments make mistakes, and markets tend to self-correct more quickly than governments.

Mr Brown's language of governmental activism risks giving credence to unworkable and undesirable schemes for a global tax on currency transactions. Instead, he should use his platform in Davos to restate strongly his belief that it is the role of governments to help their peoples rise to, and benefit from, the challenges of international competition - and that this is preferable to trying to protect people from the storm of economic



Feminism is still a cause to fight for

GERMAINE GREER has got her hus pass. She turned 60 yesterday, which gives pause for thought to those for whom it was heaven to be young in the dawn of the sexual revolution. Time for yet another appraisal of what feminism has achieved, and whether there is still a battle to be fought? Hardly. It should be universally accepted that the women's movement has achieved a great deal: that young women today owe many of their freedoms and opportunities to the courage and spirit of Professor Greer and her contemporaries.

It should also be accepted that women still have a long way to go before they can regard the battle for true equality as won. That is more controversial. There has been a backlash among men, not simply of the laddish and Loaded variety, but also of the confused and defensive kind (are the two kinds by any chance related?). There has been something of a backlash on the female side, too, epitomised by Bridget Jones and Ally McBeal, though heavily offset by a knowing, post-feminist irony. Revolutionary fervour among true believers has dimmed too, as the battle has moved from the fierce passions of the apparel-upsetters and academics into the more complex field of popular culture, infiltrating the ways in which the vast majority of people live day to day. The struggle is still being carried on in the prosaic the-

atres of the industrial tribunals; the labour market has been transformed, and yet the glass ceilings still have only a few skylights in them. There is only one woman - Marjorie Scardino - heading a FTSE 100 company, for example. On the other hand, the Government this week lived up to its responsibility with a Bill to promote "fairness at work" that sought to encourage the further feminisation of the workplace. Much of the family-friendly presentation was spin, but it is significant that what would once have been regarded as strident demands for the impossible should now be seen as feel-good public relations. And, however modest, the measures for unpaid parental leave for fathers and longer maternity leave for mothers will make a real difference.

Feminism has left its mark on the English language: the style book for this newspaper insists on "firefighter" and tries to avoid "he" as a general singular pronoun. That change is hardly complete, either, but the cutting edge has gone, leaving us with the partially accepted "Ms" and a lot of pointless confusion. This week, for example, Betty Boothroyd, the Speaker of the House of Commons, required Nick Gibb, a Conservative MP, to apologise for describing Dawn Primarolo, a Treasury minister, as a "stupid woman". Mr Gibb may be a stupid man, if that is the best insult he can dredge from his limited vocabulary, but to say so is absolutely not to insult the 48 per cent of the population who are male.

How, then, is feminism to be carried forward from this stalemate of unfinished business? The important point is that carrying on the torch is not women's burden alone

- those who are looking for the "new Germaine Greer" may be looking for spokespeople (no, that is not approved by *The Independent* style book) of the wrong sex. This is not simply a matter of the strange inversion by which the only people who call themselves feminists these days seem to be men. It has become a commonplace to observe that men are increasingly demanding, or in some cases simply assuming, more responsibility for bringing up their children - often the same men who have strutted their New Lad political incorrectness, the same men who complain that women's rights have "gone too far".

Long after the slogan was coined in Professor Greer's heyday, "the personal is political", the full implications of that are working through. If women are to achieve meaningful equality of status and respect, they have to renegotiate the whole web of intimate relationships that make up a society, and the cultural assumptions governing them. So the battle has necessarily moved far beyond the simple slogans and ideological certainties of the early days. Some of the obstacles to true equality have turned out to be as intractable as they were unexpected. It has turned out not to be so easy for working parents to leave their children in the care of others, for example, and the fear of child sex abuse has meant that men can never be as trusted as women in the caring role. It will not be for a few charismatic leaders to negotiate the hazardous route; the torch of feminism will be carried forward by millions of people, both men and women. Happy birthday, Germaine.

So do you regard Shahid and Malek as fellow countrymen?

SO WHAT was your reaction when you first heard that five "Britons" had been arrested in Yemen? Alarm? Perhaps a touch of outrage? Did you feel an instinctive twinge of pity that five of our boys could find themselves at the mercy of a brutal regime? Some of you may even have felt the urge to pick up a pen and write to the newspapers, maybe even demand that the Government do something.

And then in the next breath, when you heard that their names were Shahid, Ghulam, Malek, Mohsin and Sirmad, when the penny dropped that they were not white "Britons", did you feel some mitigation of your anger? And when the Yemeni authorities announced that these not-quite-true Brits had been planning a campaign of terrorist attacks against Westerners, did you feel that this was precisely what you expected from men with names like Shahid, Ghulam, Malek, Mohsin and Sirmad?

If the answer is yes to all or most of the above questions, I rather suspect that you are part of a majority. Not a right-wing, xenophobic majority, but a liberal one that likes to think of itself as tolerant on issues of race, and believes that by and large Britain is not a racist society.

I like to think of myself as one of those liberals. I have often compared racial attitudes in Britain to those in the United States and come away feeling that things here are a lot better. I have dismissed as unrepresentative the three incidents of racist abuse - all by whites against blacks - that I have witnessed since I started living in London a year ago.

When I drive through Shepherds

Bush on my way to work and see white cops - every other day - stopping black men and searching them. I don't really pay much attention. And the racist "Pakis out" graffiti that pops up now and again on the slides and wings in the local playground? Just the work of kids with nothing better to do, I tell myself.

I don't have many black or Asian friends here. I don't meet a great many in my daily rounds, but by and large I have been impressed with the way that people of all races seem to get on with each other.

Have I been too complacent? Unfortunately, I think the answer is yes. It has taken the unhappy saga of the Yemen arrests to shake my casual assumptions about race in Britain. For I have no doubt that had the boys in Yemen been Keith, Fred, Ian, Joe and Pete, had they been the same colour as I, then my level of outrage would have been infinitely greater.

Not just mine, of course, but that of the rest of the media, the political establishment and the great sweep of public opinion. Remember the outrage and media obsession that attended the tribulations of Louise Woodward and compare it to the whimpering indifference that has, up to now, typified the response to the Yemen Five.

Then the plight of a single white female caused shock waves from Washington to Downing Street. Television cameras were installed in her local pub and acres of newsprint were devoted to cheerleading for her defence.

Why is it that we were willing to allow the assumption of innocence to Louise Woodward, and not the Yemen Five. And why has it taken until this week, with the visits by the men's fam-



FERGAL KEANE
Have I been too complacent about race? Unfortunately, I think that the answer is yes

ilies to Yemen, for the British media to pay any detailed attention to the allegations of torture in that country?

For many people in Britain the words "Islamic" and "fundamentalist" mean one and the same thing. They have been hobbled together in the popular consciousness to create a grossly distorted view of the religion and its adherents.

"Islam" means Ayatollah Khomeini, the Taliban, Osama bin Laden. It means wild-eyed, bearded fanatics vowing vengeance on the West. Can you imagine this kind of poisonous oversimplification and demonisation being visited on Christians as a group because of the actions or utterances of our more fundamentalist clerics?

In the case of the Yemen Five the antipathy towards Islam has been extended to a generalised assumption that the men were "up to no good". But this assumption has been made solely on the word of the Yemeni authorities,

whose record for fair dealing hardly stands up to much scrutiny. When the men's families deny that their sons and brothers were fundamentalists bent on carnage, should we not extend to them the same benefit of credence as we do to the Yemenis? Whatever they were doing in Yemen, we have no right to assume that they were terrorists.

I don't doubt that the Yemeni authorities felt they were on safe ground in arresting the five. They would have expected the indifference and prejudice that have characterised our national response. They also clearly feel confidence in the ability of their secret policemen to secure the necessary confessions and convictions. By any reasonable standards Yemeni jails are places of spectacular brutality. Human rights groups speak of widespread torture and "grossly unfair" trials.

Consider this excerpt from a report by Amnesty International, published two years ago, on the conditions in Yemeni jails: "Such conditions have facilitated the systematic use of torture in Yemeni prisons and detention centres... government opponents and critics of the state have also fallen victim to abduction and beatings. Political suspects have been abducted from their homes or in the street and severely beaten to stop them criticising the government. Evidence suggests that these abuses were committed by the security forces..."

In other words, we are dealing with a judicial system that will use any means to secure a confession. When the detainees complain of electric shock torture, beatings on the soles of their feet and sexual violation, we must surely listen.

If the Yemen Five have signed confessions, then we would do well to ignore them. They are the kind of documents that would be thrown out of court in any half-decent judicial system. In Yemen, however, they may be used to secure the long-term incarceration - or worse - of five British citizens.

There is also the matter of the Yemeni government's uncertain motives in this matter. Can we assume that, hugely embarrassed by the bungled hostage rescue, they will be remotely even-handed in dealing with their British (with a small b, as it were) captives?

It is time our Government and media, all of us, woke up to what is happening in Yemen. In the last week there have been some hopeful signs. Newspapers and television have been giving increasing amounts of space to the men's families. But our politicians are too silent.

I have seen Labour's Keith Vaz on television, but none of the party's bigger guns. And as for the Tories who are now proclaiming a vision of a broader Britain? I await Mr Hague's intervention with interest.

This trial may prove to be a defining moment in the debate about Britishness. It is not simply a matter of crime and punishment. We have a chance to make a statement about inclusiveness, about the nature of British identity at the end of the century. This is an admirably open society in many ways. But the issues of race and identity need far more work than most of us have been willing to admit.

The writer is a BBC special correspondent

THE INDEPENDENT INTERNATIONAL

The *Independent International*, the weekly newspaper, is packed full of international and British news, comment, features and sport. Containing the pick-of-the-week from *The Independent* and *Independent on Sunday*, it is available anywhere in the world by subscription via air mail. Buy the gift of an annual subscription for friends or family abroad, and we will also send them a free copy of the book *Shadows of Brightness*, a collection of photographs of Kenya.



Australia (All costs include postage and packaging) £55
New Zealand, Fiji, PNG, Pacific Island £75
Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam £85
Africa, Hong Kong, Middle East, India, China, Japan, USA, Canada, South America £105
Europe £105

I enclose my cheque, made payable to 'Independent Newspapers (UK)', OR please debit my credit card for: £
Credit card type: Visa/Mastercard: Credit card number:

Signature: _____

Name of card holder: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Telephone number: _____

Please send *The Independent International* to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Country: _____

Postcode: _____

Please complete in block capitals and send to:
The Independent International, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, London E14 5DL or fax this form to: 0171 293 2488

MONITOR

ALL THE NEWS OF THE WORLD

IOC corruption scandal • Northern Ireland • John Paul II meets Bill Clinton • Jordanian succession • Blind date wedding

NORTHERN IRELAND

Opinions about the possibility of overcoming difficulties in order to fully implement the Good Friday agreement

THE IRISH TIMES

IT HAS never been more important for the British and Irish governments to make clear they share a common determination to press ahead with implementing the agreement. At times it seems Mo Mowlam, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, is the only senior minister in either government who is prepared to defend the spirit and the letter of the agreement with real conviction. More power to her, but this is a project which demands the full attention of both governments. Northern Ireland must not be allowed to become one of the casualties of the present crisis facing the Government.

their position in the new Ireland. While this is a time of teething difficulties and a voyage through uncharted waters for us all, the reality is that, to create a new society in Ireland, the ways of the past have to be confined fully to the past. And while it is equally hard to teach old dogs new tricks or persuade leopards to do away with their spots, it is imperative that it is exactly that which happens.

The new era and the new optimism that it brings are demanding real change and real commitment to new ways. Those demands must be met.

AN PHOBLAIC [REPUBLICAN NEWS]

AS THE implementation of the Good Friday agreement repeatedly hits the hurdles laid by Unionists, the voice of inclusiveness has to continue echoing. It has helped overcome the obstructionism and exclusion of the past. In the run-up to the final report on the All-Ireland bodies, abandoning the nationalist voice of consensus does not encourage Unionists to recognise the legitimacy of nationalists to be represented in the Executive. It does not help the agreement to be implemented. It does not help the cause of peace.

NEW STATESMAN

SINCE THE agreement was signed, it has been spattered in blood – of the 29 men and women blown up by a republican bomb in Omagh; of the Catholic and Protestant men shot, tortured and beaten to show that the paramilitaries of both traditions still command their patches. If this is peace say the opponents of the Belfast Agreement, then perhaps it would be better to go back to war.

BELFAST TELEGRAPH

PAISLEY TOOK advantage of the issue about whether early prison releases should be stopped in reaction to so-called punishment attacks, but the only effect of his intervention will be negative. Old animosities have been revived, with untold consequences, and the whole atmosphere of the peace process has been poisoned. Paisley may think he has done a good day's work, exposing the inaction of successive governments, but he has achieved nothing that will contribute to the better, more pluralist future that most people voted for last year.

IRISH WORLD

THE POLITICAL parties and the paramilitaries are all jostling for

Shot down in flames

NEW YORK POST
US

BESMIRCHED BY eye-popping reports of corruption, the International Olympic Committee is in crisis. It does not concern just a few bad apples. This bunch has rotted from the top down – and at the very top is IOC president Juan Antonio Samaranch. In the face of the recent corruption, Samaranch has suggested changes in the Olympic selection process. One reform proposal would allow decisions to be made only by the executive board, instead of the entire IOC membership. Not surprising: That means only Samaranch and a handful of his cronies would benefit from the schmooze-fest that is the Olympic bidding process. Though the world has watched while the IOC goes down in flames, Samaranch has refused to acknowledge wrongdoing and has made no offer to resign. It's high time he gave up his control and allow this organization of international goodwill a measure of respectability once again.

MING PAO
China

THE SPIRIT of the Olympic Games has been tarnished as corruption scandals over Sydney 2000 and the Winter Games in Salt Lake City come to light. These days, sports is always linked with money. The IOC has suffered from the bribery scandal. Structural defects of the committee can be blamed for the swirling corruption: the selection procedure of the country holding the Games is insufficiently transparent, voting rights are in the hands of a small circle of secretive insiders, and committee members are selected for life by the committee itself. All three elements have caused the rot, and the stench of deceit.

THE NEW PAPER
Singapore

THIS WHOLE Olympics bribery scandal isn't shocking. No, we all know full well just how crooked the world is and how money talks in every field of activity. The International Olympic Committee members who took bribes to vote for a certain country to be host have done no worse than many politicians and business leaders.



IOC CORRUPTION SCANDAL

International opinion on the bribery allegations engulfing the International Olympic Committee over its choice of venues

THE AGE
Australia

ONE OF the biggest problems in tackling corruption is defining it. When does nepotism and cronyism become bribery and corruption? There has been demonstrated corruption involved in the granting of the 2002 Olympic Games to Salt Lake City. But

what of the blatant favors asked by, and in some cases given to, IOC delegates? When the giving of favors and gifts turns into corruption can be a matter of degree, but it is principally a matter of transparency. The test is whether those giving or receiving the gifts would want it known. The possibility that it might become public is a great deterrent to bribery, which is why the media is so essential.

THE WASHINGTON POST
US

FOR EVERY serious attempt to root out corruption, there's always someone ready to call a bribe a "humanitarian" gesture, a reflection of "culture" or simply a "willingness to please". We've heard all those excuses, and more, in connection with Salt Lake City. They should be on trial now.

LE MONDE
France

THIS AFFAIR will enable us to return to the controllable organisations of the Olympics. We must avoid economics taking the upper hand and dictating its law to the organisational committees. The IOC must also agree to becoming somewhat more condensed; 115 members is too much. 25 or 30 would be far easier to regulate. The IOC is representative of society but not representative of sport.

AFTONBLADET
Sweden

THE IOC has long looked like a fraternal order: closed, self-renewing, often completely male. The ideological superstructure is feudalism. Despite this, the Games have had an exceptional common-man popularity. Politicians have long used the Olympics in their own propaganda campaigns. Hitler and Ulbricht placed themselves in the light glancing off gold medals. The US and the old Soviet Union used the Olympics with political boycotts. Athletics' character in recent decades has changed drastically; the ideal of amateurism has drowned in the flood of prize money. The combination of formalism and economic power has made the IOC especially receptive to corruption.

JORDANIAN SUCCESSION

Reaction to the King of Jordan's choice of his son Prince Abdullah to be his successor

JERUSALEM POST
Israel

IT IS NOT just in Jordan's but also in Israel's interest that the next king succeed. As Hussein's interventions at key moments in the peace process indicate, Jordan plays a unique role in the region. At this critical time, Jordan and the region need steady, trusted hands at the wheel. The best hands would be those of Hussein himself, whom Israelis and Jordanians hope will regain full health. As the King introduces changes in Jordan's ruling hierarchy it is to be hoped that he will manage to pass on his strength and vision to his chosen successor as Hashemite monarch.

BOSTON GLOBE
US

WHEN KING Hussein returned to Amman, he openly rued his brother's failure to give firm responses to the despotisms in Damascus and Baghdad. Some

skeptics may discount this palace account of the King's motivation as merely a cover for a paternal ambition as traditional as monarchy itself. But King Hussein has been able to stay in power for 46 years because he has not allowed himself to be careless about crucial matters. Jordan needs another king as canny as he.

LA VANGUARDIA
Spain

THE DESIGNATION by Hussein of his first-born Abdullah as heir to the throne has placed Jordan on the threshold of a new era; in this way the monarch has put an end to an interim situation that posed grave problems for the future of a country that is key to the Middle East. Jordan, with 13 communities, among them the Palestinians, who are in majority, and three religions, continues to be a powder keg, but the succession in the Jordanian monarchy is the guarantee for continuity.

JOHN PAUL II MEETS BILL CLINTON

Views on the meeting of the Pope and the President of the United States in an aircraft hanger in St Louis, Missouri

ST LOUIS POST
DISPATCH
US

THERE THEY were, the saint and the sinner, meeting in the hangar. When the new millennium and new century officially arrive, Pope John Paul II may have been the last pope to serve his full reign in the 20th century and Clinton will be the first president to serve in the 21st century. In contemporary history the Pope will represent what once was and Clinton will represent what will be. The Pope will be remembered for his tireless battle to stem the changing beliefs of his flock. The President will be remembered for impeachment and his tireless effort to adjust his own beliefs.

LA STAMPA
Italy

CLINTON HAS been weakened in his spirit by allowing too much to his body. Pope John



Paul II has become frail, despite the strength of his spirit. The meeting was an opportunity to show once again their incompatibility. The pontiff and the American President try to control the world following two opposite principles. John Paul II calls for the end of violence as a way to solve the conflicts and looks forward to the birth of an alternative power to the United States. Clinton continues bombing each continent to reaffirm American supremacy. What makes them look alike is their ability to raise enthusiasm, more than a real consensus.

NEW YORK POST
US

The Pope has found a receptive audience among youngsters toward whom he has directed his message with fervor. Liberals try to explain the Pope's popularity with the claim that the public loves the messenger but doesn't care for his message. They said the same thing about Reagan; it wasn't true then and it's not true now. The Pope's message is one for all faiths and all ages.

THE NEW YORK TIMES
US

John Paul's criticisms of materialism were part of a trip underwritten by Pepsi-Cola and several other companies. He has won his battle with Communism, but his struggle to mount a spiritual critique of capitalism and commercial culture promises to be an even more complex task.

BLIND DATE WEDDING

Comment on the marriage in Birmingham of two people who had never previously met

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

THE PRINCIPAL factor in whether a marriage succeeds is the level of commitment brought to it. While it is heartening that Mr Cordell plans to "put 100 per cent behind it," the fact that he and his wife entered a competition offering a honeymoon, car and flat for a year is bound to raise suspicions. The media's artificial world is the opposite of the reality of marriage. That consists of compromises, compactness and consideration, but its compensations can be huge. If (as – against the odds – we hope) this stunt develops into a happy union, that would be, too.

THE BIRMINGHAM POST

THE PUBLICITY stunt which brought about their wedding has debased the idea of marriage and turned it into nothing but a cheap and prurient way

of exploiting people's lives for a brief bout of entertainment. It tells us more than we want to know about the debasement of modern manners that more than 200 young men and women were prepared to subject themselves to this "experiment in love". The wedding may not be a sham – only the couple involved will know about that and they may not be sure yet – but it is certainly shaming.

THE SUN

THIS PUBLICITY stunt makes a mockery of marriage. Saying "I do" for the benefit of a radio station so you can get a free Bahamas holiday requires a bride and groom who are shallow, immature and stupid. Greg Cordell and Carla Germal, 26, certainly fit the bill on all counts. Marriage remains the best method devised for keeping family and home together. This cheap scam turns a serious business into a joke. Except it's not at all funny.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK



"I've n't thing decent to be a singer." Checco Zalone, singer and actor.

"You have to 'resharpen your quill after a page of writing. Shakespeare must've gone through so many geese." Joseph Fiennes, actor.

"Economics is a game anyone can play. The difficulty in economics is to separate the good from the bad and the ugly." Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England.

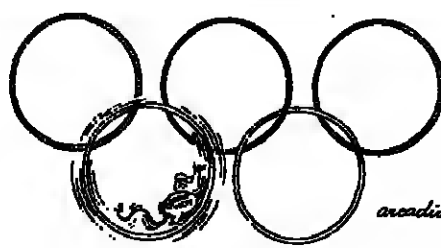
"If they go into this thinking that it's a marriage made in heaven, they haven't got a cat in hell's chance." Russell Grant, astrologer, on the "blind date" marriage.

"I occasionally have women in the kitchen, but you can never get into the staff too." Gordon Ramsay, chef.

"It's not huge, but it is nice, in a good street with smashing neighbours, and I will miss it." Peter Mandelson, MP on his house, valued at £750,000.

THE VIEWS OF THE WORLD

THE NEW OLYMPIC LOGO

DER STANDARD
AustriaLA NACION
Costa RicaLIANHE ZHAOBAO
SingaporeSUN NEWS
US

Elizabeth Dole vs Hillary Rodham Clinton in 2000? Is that possible? Might that be the way this nation politically turns the millennium? Might we finally acknowledge that men have done a simply terrible job, especially lately, of running this country and turn to two bright women to appeal to the electorate to choose between them? Well, we know Dole, is at least somewhat interesting; she has resigned her seat, Cross presidency to run, if she decides to do so. And we know that Clinton has already sat at the right hand of president, real power, despite all the ups and downs of that public couple and of their private marriage. But is she

presidential material? Move over, Vice President Al Gore. Move over, Gov George W Bush. Let the women show all of us how it should be done.

CUBA FREE PRESS

National Revolutionary Police (PNR) have arrested former political prisoner Manuel Diaz Cabrera and charged him with selling a hog to Jorge Capote of Ariza in Cienfuegos province. Various other politically incorrect citizens in this area believe the authorities are trying to fabricate a case against Diaz Cabrera so as to sabotage his dislodgement with prison. He denies the charge. Diaz was released from prison last year at the request of Pope John Paul.

RESEARCH BY SALLY CHATTERTON

You've got my number. Please stop using it

AT EXACTLY 27 minutes past three every afternoon my telephone rings. I pick it up. Silence. "Hello, hello," I say. Still silence. No embarrassed shuffling, no scrambling to replace the receiver, no heavy breathing, even. I put the phone down, count 10, pick it up and listen. My mute caller is still there listening, waiting.

Telephone silence is spooky. I don't like being spooked. I dial 1471 but naturally the caller has withheld his number. In the next 15 minutes I get six more of these silent calls, and then my friend Nick telephones to ask whether seven across could be "existentialist" - it's certainly 14 letters beginning blank x ending i blank t - and I know I'm back on stream.

I've been getting these calls for the last two weeks. If I'm out when

they call, they register blank on the answering machine.

I rang the operator, who put me through to a special number for nuisance calls. Did I want to change my telephone number, asked the nuisance-call operator. Change my telephone number? Was he mad? I've had this telephone number longer than I've had my bunsai, my library card, my Bradford & Bingley account, my husband.

"Certainly not," I said. "Why can't you find out who's calling me and arrest them?" There must be some law, surely, against this sort of oral stalking. The nuisance-call operator said they couldn't find out who was ringing, but the chances were that it was a power-dialler. I've heard of power dressing and power lunching, but power-

calling? Confused visions passed before my eyes, of big men in dirty raincoats, smiling menacingly as they jabbed

the buttons of their S series Mercedes car phones.

What's a power-dialler? "It's a computer," said the nuisance-call operator. My name and telephone number, probably my address as well, were in a teletext computer whose operator was probably on her tea break. They're usually women. In her absence the computer automatically dialled the calls but wasn't programmed to give the time-honoured spiel about the untold millions I'd save if I were to install a fitted kitchen, double-glazing or a loft extension within the next two weeks. "But why can't they switch their computers off when they're having their tea break?" I protested. "And anyway, how did they get my number?"

Here's the sinister hit. The last time I ordered anything by mail

order I must have forgotten to tick the box saying "I do not wish my personal details to be passed on to any other sales organisation", advised the operator. "What tick? What box? What mail order?" I squealed, starting to feel paranoid. I don't order things by post. I live four floors above a retail mecca called the King's Road, for heaven's sake. I don't need to order things by post.

"Do you ever get junk mail, catalogues, financial advice, that sort of thing?" asked the operator. "Yes, of course I do, dozens of them, and I chuck them away unopened."

"Ah," said the operator. "That's the problem. If you don't read the brochures you won't get to the refusal box. I can request that your number be removed from the major telesales lists, and with any

luck most of your power-dialled calls should stop."

Next morning I got my usual quota of junk mail. I tore open the first envelope, containing a flimsy home health mail-order catalogue with a picture of a smiling brunette on an exercise bicycle on the cover, crammed full of the sort of merchandise no high-street shop could possibly display. Such as the nose and ear hair-trimmer for £5.95, or the reusable incontinence shields, machine washable. Personally, when I get to the sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans bladder control stage I'd sooner have the portable urinal featured on page 18, £5.95 or two for £12. That solves next year's Christmas presents.

Hang on, though, on page 22 there's a picture of an ingenious device called a portable bidet. Cur-

iously surgical-looking in design. It's even got a soap-holder. It sits over most lavatories and has a hook for easy storage. But it's portable and you pack it in your case to stay with friends, do you really want to hang it up in their bathroom next to their pink flannels and fleecy guest towels? Far better play safe and hang it in the back of your car beside the fluffy dice.

There was a whole section on dental hygiene, with ultrasonic denture cream and a stainless steel tongue-scraper to cure halitosis. You could scrape your tongue as you're sitting on your portable bidet in your friend's weekend cottage. Please God she has a lock on the bathroom door.

I never got as far as the refusal box - what's a little power-dialling between friends anyway?



SUE ARNOLD
Confused visions passed before my eyes of big men in dirty raincoats, smiling menacingly

THE SATURDAY PROFILE

JACK STRAW, HOME SECRETARY

The man who could be king

LET US paint a picture in the heroic style, of the court of King Tony. The fair-faced young PM himself sits radiant and assured in the centre. To his right, his Chancellor, the dour but handsome Brown, rests one hand on the throne, and in the other holds a scroll. Captain of the Guard, rough-bev'n Jack Prescott, pike at ready and belligerent expression on his face, stands on the other side. And a group of gaudy, happy young courtiers - men and women - spill out from behind.

So the eye is not immediately drawn to the dark, lean, bespectacled figure in the corner. He, alone, is sitting at a desk writing, his clerk hovering nearby. This man wears neither ruff nor gorgeous hose, and strikes no attitude. Yet he clearly wields serious authority over the affairs of the realm. When, later, the dancing begins and Leicester and Essex dance the Notting Hill Reel, he will make his farewells and return to his family with tales of the court - just as another might relate a visit to an eccentric uncle, or to the zoological gardens. At 10 of the clock, one imagines, Mr Secretary Straw retires to bed.

But it is this latter-day Walsingham, not his showy colleagues, whom the world now tips as the man who might take over should Tony suddenly decide to spend all his time in the Seychelles. Brown has too many enemies. Cook needs a year in rehab. Prescott does not aspire; but Jack Straw is the coming man. So we should do well to get to know him better.

Certainly Labour's enemies are concerned by him. In a column in yesterday's *Daily Telegraph*, the writer - complaining about Straw's championing of equalising the gay and heterosexual ages of consent - compared him to Beria, Trotsky, the Gestapo and Robespierre. (I won't bore you with the tortured logic that leads from Beria to the defence of equal rights for gay people. It is clearly a side of the NKVD that most historians have somehow missed.) To many on the left, meanwhile, Straw's tentative suggestion that some teenage mothers might look more positively at the option of having their babies adopted, smacks of Keith Joseph eugenics. Both sides portray him as a puritanical authoritarian.

What most commentators do agree about, however, is that Straw has reversed one of the great political paradigms: that it is much easier to talk the talk in opposition, than it is to walk the walk in government. The post of Home Secretary is usually thought to be an unpromising launch-pad for further ambitions, fraught as it is with all kinds of contingent dangers. Yet chief constables adore him (I know, I've spoken to them), reformers generally believe he is on their side, and Middle England and the council estates unite to approve his policies.

Yet, less than three years ago he was nearly a write-off. In the debate that followed the resignation of the prisons' chief Derek Lewis, Straw seemed maladroit and

badly prepared for his confrontation with the troubled Tory Home Secretary, Michael Howard. After the election, knowing journalists speculated, he'd be moved aside. (Straw later revealed that a bad attack of tinnitus had made it very hard for him to hear Tory interventions, and to respond.) In the event, Tony Blair took no notice of the gossip.

An anonymous neighbour on the Essex council estate where Straw was brought up in the Fifties, once described the intense young boy as "priggish". This is often the

tough-on-crime politician, in reality no paradox at all. In the Years of Revolt '68, '69 and '70 there were two trajectories for a young left-winger to follow. The first was to join the Revolutionary Socialist Students Federation and try to bring governments down by street protests. The other was to join the long march through the institutions, beginning with the official student body, the NUS. Straw, then a law student at Leeds University, chose the latter. When he became president of the NUS, it was as a channeller of student protest, not a creator of it. Trotskyists hated him for his effectiveness, for the way in which he turned yells into briefing documents.

The task suited the man. Straw is not a romantic revolutionary, or a gesture politician. He hasn't the gift of oratory as has, say, Neil Kinnock or Tony Benn. His movement on the platform, or in the House, is economical. He is suspicious of ego and his vanities are minor; he is not half-monster, as some big politicians are. Michael Heseltine is his polar opposite.

Unlike Tony Blair, Straw is a party man. Having left the NUS he worked the Labour version of Route One to goal: local councillor, political adviser, parliamentary candidate. His mentor was the extravagantly coiffed Barbara Castle, whom Jack advised in the Seventies. When she retired from the Commons, Straw succeeded her in Blackburn, almost by divine right of succession.

A party man, then, but definitely not Old Labour. Straw held a sequence of shadow portfolios under Neil Kinnock, whose reforms he completely supported, and can claim to have been the instigator of the dropping of the old Clause 4 of the Labour Party constitution, the resolution to do so having originated in his own Blackburn constituency. In this Straw was considerably in advance of many colleagues.

He is, however, only a demi-Blairite. Straw does not like Liberal Democrats much, is an opponent of electoral reform, and was not delighted by Scottish devolution on terms that left England still subsidising Edinburgh. If he is gung-ho for Europe (which he once opposed as vehemently as any in the Labour Party), he has kept very quiet about it. Yet it is an interesting comment on Straw's commitment to the collective, that Liberal Democrats working with him on the Cabinet Committee have found him pretty diligent.

The Home Secretary has sometimes found himself in the company of even more unlikely allies than the Lib Dems. Jack Straw and Paul Dacre, editor-in-chief of Associated Newspapers and scourge of adulterers, met each other when Dacre was editor of the Leeds University student newspaper, *Leeds Student*, and Straw was student-union president. Some have inferred from this, and from Straw's stance on crime, that the Home Secretary is a moraliser in the old-fashioned sense. This is wrong. Straw's own father (Walter, an insurance clerk and conscientious



In an age of spin, the Home Secretary is straight, blunt and very clear

David Rose

objector) left home and Jack's mother, Joan, a teacher, when Jack was 10. Straw himself was divorced after a marriage contracted when he was just 21. He is not, in that sense, at all judgemental. Straw is a man of his generation.

Certainly a family man, given to camping holidays with the kids, which may be why he was close enough to his son William to persuade the boy down to the local rink when the "Home Secretary's son tried to sell me drugs" story broke. The skill and straightforwardness with which Straw dealt with William's little error earned respect across the journalistic spectrum.

But he does loathe the crime with an "I was poor, but I never mugged an old lady" kind of zeal. He is impatient of the dilettantism of the professional middle classes, and identifies with the council tenant driven to distraction by lousy neighbours. The term "public space" connotes something as valuable to Jack Straw as "private space" does to the most ardent Tory. He regards its violation by drunks, pimps, vandals and drug-takers as being akin to burglary or assault. It was this toughness that helped to neutralise the law-and-order issue for Labour at the last election - a feat that

had previously proved to be impossible. This populist toughness is linked to the dark side of Straw. He values individual liberty too tightly, and sometimes situates himself where "ordinary people" are, regardless of whether or not they are right. Nine months ago, the author Gitta Sereny revealed that she had paid the child murderer Mary Bell a sum of money for co-operating in a book about what made Bell a killer. The murders had happened 30 years before, when Bell was 11. She had reconstructed her life and in no sense could he have been said to be "profiting" from her crime. But this was not how it felt to the relatives of those killed, to the tabloid press and to the Home Secretary. Straw's open letter to *The Sun* (of all papers!) was a model of liberalism.

Straw has also defended the secret services, stating this week that he has no wish to see the files compiled about him when he was young. The arguments here are complex, but it would have been reassuring had the Home Secretary not hinted that, on reflection, maybe MI5 was right to have kept him and others under surveillance. Nevertheless, such straight dealing does tend to undermine Baroness

Thatcher's argument that Straw's actions over the extradition of General Pinochet smack of political calculation. No one whom I have met who knows Jack Straw agrees with this judgement.

The other, related question mark over Jack Straw concerns a possible lack of imagination. It is not just that he was a law student rather than, say, a student of art history. After all, so were Tony and Cherie. And Bill and Hillary. And we all know Bill's got a lot of imagination. But Jack Straw is not a weaver of political dreams. But neither is he a product of spin. Straw has always put his faith in simple briefers: guys who know what the policies are and who see it as their job to tell people. Conversations with Straw himself lack that frustrating, oblique quality that characterises discussions with those who are perpetually working the percentages. He is straight, blunt, occasionally dismissive, and very clear.

And I have hardly heard a bad word said about him since the May 1997 election. Of all the members of Tony Blair's court, he is the one most in possession of the elusive qualities of kingship.

DAVID AARONOVITCH

LIFE STORY

Born: John Whitaker Straw, 3 August 1946, Buckhurst Hill, Essex.
Educated: Staples Road Primary; Brentwood School; University of Leeds (LLB). Was called to the Bar in 1972.
Political career: President of the National Union of Students 1969-71; Islington councillor, 1971-78; Special adviser to Barbara Castle and Peter Shore (1974-77); MP for Blackburn since 1979; Shadow Cabinet member 1987-97.
Other jobs: Called to the Bar, 1972, practised 1972-74; Granada TV (World in Action) staffer, 1977-79; chairman of governors of Pimlico school 1995-98.
Family: Married his first wife, Anthea, in 1968, marriage dissolved 1978, one daughter (deceased). Married Alice Perkins in 1978, one son and one daughter.
What he says about his job: "I don't want to preach. But in government you do have a platform and you must use it."
What they say about him: "Cunning" (Barbara Castle); "One of the government's all-round heavy hitters" (Alastair Campbell).
Hobbies: Walking, cycling, soufflés.
Admires: Responsible parents and the Routemaster bus.



THE PICTURE of Joyce Grenfell on the jacket of a recently published volume of her letters shows her writing in her study, looking relaxed, soft, feminine and really quite beautiful. It comes as something of a shock.

So utterly convincing was Joyce's galumphing gaucherie in the St Trinian's movies, and the well-meaning but hopelessly nursery teacher of her most famous monologue, that it is sometimes difficult to conceive of another existence in which she is not wielding a hockey stick and facing the camera with an embarrassed, toothy smile.

The nursery teacher is a typical Grenfell character, full of misplaced enthusiasm, gradually losing patience with her recalcitrant charges - "George, don't do that!" -

but in a very genteel, English way. It is a beautifully observed piece and, like so much of Grenfell, says more about a certain kind of middle-class Englishwoman than any amount of Bejman's Joan Hunter Durnery.

Joyce was a kind of poet of niceness. This probably came naturally to her since she was by all accounts every bit as kind, caring and, well, nice as most of her heroines, the difference being that in Joyce's case, acts of generosity were achieved with quiet efficiency.

Janie Hampton, who edited her letters, tells how Joyce paid school fees for nephews and nieces, and occasionally gave a car or a house or, bizarrely, in one case a dishwasher, to a friend in need. (Elvis gave Cadillacs, Joyce household

ACCIDENTAL HEROES OF THE 20TH CENTURY

25: JOYCE GRENFELL, ACTOR

appliances. How very English.) "We are fearfully rich," wrote Grenfell, "and of all the forms of self-indulgence, giving is the pleasantest."

But it is Joyce's hugely influential body of work - often disregarded or seriously undervalued - rather than her saintliness, that qualifies her for inclusion in this series; the more so since it stemmed from such unlikely beginnings.

If anybody's success could be said

to be inadvertent it is Grenfell's. She started performing her sketches and songs in revues only in her late twenties, in 1939, after friends whom she had entertained at dinner parties urged her to "have a bash".

Joyce's gentle geying of women of her own background - debutante, Paris finishing school - was perhaps not that remarkable. But how she ever acquired her ear for the cadences of lower-middle-class and

working-class conversations remains something of a mystery.

The pieces in which Joyce atteped outside her own class have been criticised for being patronising, but this is absolutely unjustified. In a monologue called "The Telephone Call", a 30-year-old in Sydney who has given up her job as a shopgirl to look after her aged father tries to explain to her boyfriend why she can't go to the pictures with him that evening. "I asked Letty to come over and sit with him, but she's got the kids and Frank and it's a hell of a way over here, and they do take him out driving in the car on Sundays... I pot him first because I have to..." But you know what I feel about you. The impatient boyfriend dumps her. It's poignant, it feels true and, what is

more, it has a strong feminist streak. It would be fanciful to place Joyce Grenfell, who died in 1979, in the vanguard of the women's movement, although many of her pieces pointed out inequalities between the sexes, but she was certainly a standard-bearer for the kind of character-based comedy performed by people such as Victoria Wood and Barry Humphries. She was also, happily, not completely without malice.

A wickedly funny piece in which a writer of children's books talks in two terms about how she writes her almost identical books by going into her Hidey-Hole and visiting the Land of Make-Believe is obviously based on Enid Blyton. "Now my husband has his own Hidey-Hole," she says, "where he adds up."



THE WEEKLY MUSE

BY MARTIN NEWELL



A blue moon due tomorrow night
When January shuffles out
And February lumbers in.
Ill-tempered as a case of gout,
His chamberpot of stale rain
Brimful of lukewarm winter days.
A half-day closing firebug sun
To set the sulking clouds ablaze.

The disappearing apple.
There's a subject for a poet.
The dreaming English orchards
Were the places where they'd grow it -
The russet and the Blenheim
Or the rough old d'Arcey Spice -
But the supermarket buyers
Think they wouldn't look as "nice".
As those waxy plastic objects
Which you see them putting out,
And as all their adverts tell you:
Choice - it's what it's all about.

More sex pervading everything...

The media's full of sex
And prurient fascination
With concave and convex.
The latest thing to crop up
On an over-stuffed agenda
Is the Old Vic's new production
On the theme of the pudenda.
This yonic veneration,
Though it isn't quite a play,
Asks the thought-provoking question:
"If it talked, what would it say?"
Vaginal conversation?
Not the sort of thing I'd try,
But even if it happened
How the hell would I reply?

A perfume firm, American.
Has launched a certain winner.
I gave some to my girlfriend
Last evening over dinner.
The subtle scent of "Essex"
Is sweetly charismatic.
The high note's Harwich Harbour,
The undertone's emphatic -
A Billerica boot fair,
A whiff of car-interior,
A hint of Thorpe-le-Soken,
And something far superior -
An Elmstead Market feed-shed?
A dog on Clacton sands?
My hostess smelled of lager.
I was putty in her hands.

THE WEASEL

Charles I was beheaded 350 years ago but in this dozy realm you'd hardly know it. Most people seem keener on making marmalade

NOW HERE'S a thing. No one knows who decapitated King Charles I, an event that took place 350 years ago today, shortly after 2pm on 30 January 1649. The axeman was obviously a pro, since the monarch's head was parted from his body via a single blow to the third vertebra. However, since they were understandably wary of retribution, both the executioner and his assistant wore heavy disguise. As CV Wedgwood points out in her enthralling account *The Trial of Charles I*, they were not only masked but also equipped "with hair and beards that were evidently not their own". For a king to have his head chopped off is bad enough, but it adds insult to injury when the deed is performed by someone wearing false whiskers.

It is a classic example of British understatement that this event, surely the most significant constitutional drama since the Norman conquest, is being marked by an exhibition consisting of two small display cases in the Banqueting House on Whitehall. Charles passed his final hours in Inigo Jones's architectural gem.

A historian has noted that the condemned monarch would have heard "workmen cutting planks and driving nails" as they constructed a temporary scaffold adjoining the building. Ironically, before stepping through a window in order to reach the scaffold Charles would have passed under Rubens's ceiling allegory, which depicts Wise Government (a sultry beauty) holding a hildie over Intemperate Rebellion (a cringing wretch).

Though the exhibition is modest in

scale, it merits a detour. The Archbishop of Canterbury has lent a pair of embroidered gloves worn by the monarch on the day of his execution. There is also a nicely crocheted cap which kept the royal head warm - while still attached, I hasten to add. The Society of King Charles the Martyr (still active after three-and-a-half centuries) has donated a splinter of wood hacked from the royal coffin.

But the most creepily thrilling object is the King's death warrant, allowed out of the House of Lords for the first time. It turns out to be a small piece of parchment, 8in deep and slightly wider than the page you're currently holding. Though it is much faded, it is possible to read the flowing script: "Charles Stuart King of England is... to be put to death by the severing of his head from his body." Third in line among the 59 signatures that follow, in large, clear handwriting, is "O. Cromwell".

Oddly enough, the last name in the list has been partially erased. According to CV Wedgwood, the signature of one Gregory Clement was half-heartedly scratched out when he was caught in bed with his maid-servant. Since his name was still legible, Clement did not escape the chop when the Regicides were hunted down following the Restoration in 1660. Cromwell himself had been dead for two years, so the Royalists had to satisfy themselves with digging up his body and displaying the Protector's head on a pole for a quarter of a century.

Of course, the dramatic event that took place on a freezing afternoon 350 years ago scarcely stirs much interest today. Or does it? This morning, the Society of King Charles the Martyr is holding its annual service of commemoration in the Banqueting House. At the same time, outside in Whitehall, a group called Movement Against the Monarchy plans to hold a "Party to



Celebrate the Beheading of Charles I? Let's hope no one loses their head.

IT'S THAT time again. Like one of the weird sisters from the Scottish play, Mrs Weasel has been hovering over a seething cauldron, while croaking strange incantations:

With orange from Seville, a pan you fill.

To help it congeal, some pectin you steal.
Then bubble awhile with Tute & Lyle.

This year, sad to relate, her spell went somewhat awry. Half-way through the first batch of marmalade, she rechecked her recipe and let fly an anguished shriek: "Drat it! I put the sugar in too early!" (I give a bowdlerised version.) Pressing on regardless, she bottled the result, which stubbornly refused to gel. Disconsolately, she shook a jar and the chunks of peel whirled round inside like goldfish.

I was promptly dispatched into the drizzle of south London for more preserving sugar. In every supermarket, it was the same story: an empty shelf in the sugar section, where marmalade maniacs had beaten me to it. Eventually, I tracked down a cache of seven packets in Sainsbury's hidden behind the demerara and Mrs W resumed production. This time, she burnt it. Not enough to spoil, but quite sufficient to raise her temper to the "rolling boil" specified in the recipe - though this usually applies to the marmalade rather than the cook.

Mercifully, on her third and fourth attempts, my increasingly sticky consort was more successful and the kitchen table filled with a hittersweet battalion of jars. As she pinged a rubber band to secure the cover of the 47th and final jar, their creator suddenly erupted: "If it's all that good, why don't the Spanish make it themselves?"

(The strange fact is that Mrs W doesn't eat marmalade.) "Well, the Portuguese still make the quince jam called marmelada, from whence our word derives," I replied in my annoying male way, "but they don't seem to like Olde English in Seville." I thought of cracking the old one about oranges lacking appeal, but one glance at Mrs W's phy-zog told me that it was not a good idea.

A CHERISHED illusion hites the dust on page 34 of *Mon on the Flying Trapeze: The Life and Times of WC Fields*, by Simon Louvish (Faber & Faber, £14.99). Though everyone believes that the inscription on the comedian's tombstone is "It's better than playing Philadelphia" or possibly "On the whole, I'd sooner be playing Philadelphia", this lapidary mot turns out to be apocryphal. According to Louvish, the plaque on the comedian's requary (he requested cremation) merely reads "WC Fields 1880-1946".

But one aspect of the Fields legend is unassailable. The index of this sprawling but entertaining volume lists 21 references under "penchant for alcohol" and a further three under "hatred of water". A major pleasure of the book is Louvish's generous quotation from the great curmudgeon's dialogue. No one in cinema had a more distinctive way with a line.

You can even hear his voice in a four-word quote from the film (said to be his best) which gives the book its title. It occurs when he accidentally fires a gun near his wife: "Fields (a little eagerly): 'Did I kill yer?'"

SPIRIT OF THE AGE

PAUL VALLELY

An organised faith in humanity

I HAVE wanted for a long time to meet Nicolas Walter. He is the chap who writes combative, dare I say tetchy, letters whenever I suggest that there may be a link between the decline of religion and the growing sense of insecurity and anxiety in the modern world. Morality, he insists, can exist independent of the Judeo-Christian tradition in which our secular values grew. It would be nice to know so.

Mr Walter is part of the cadre of militant activists who are not happy with the mere drift of society towards greater secularisation. They want to push it along and tidy it up, so that all the anomalies of our religious heritage are placed in the intellectual museum where they belong.

There was a huge stack of books on the ground floor of the offices of the Rationalist Press, Nicolas Walter after 20 years at the organisation's helm, is about to retire and is moving out of the flat at the top of its Islington office. It has not been an easy place for him in recent times. Chemotherapy for a cancer has severely crippled him and he can make the arduous progress down and up the stairs only once a day. Next year he will move to the country, with as many of the books as he can fit into his new place there.

But his atheism is far from a sublimated railing against a malign divinity responsible for his unhappy infirmity. Mr Walter is, in the circumstances, a rather jovial, bearded chap, with a ready laugh and an agreeable manner,

who traces his anti-religious dispendance to a childhood which he describes as occurring in a family that, he said, was "left-wing, non-religious, optimistic but angry, and very sharply and explicitly critical of the world around them."

The irony about the avowedly non-religious Ethical Rationalist Humanist Secularist Movement to which he belongs is that it resembles nothing so much as a religion itself. This is not its official title, but you have to include that many abstract adjectives if you are to cover the range of its belief without leaving anybody out. This is largely because it has been given by as many splits and schisms as any religious denomination could respectably hope for. It began with a Victorian Ethical Society, and mutated into the National Secular Society and then the Rationalist Press Association before merging into the British Humanist Association, only for the rationalists to withdraw because they felt their position was being tainted by the quasi-religious temperament of softy ethicists.

There is something terribly old-fashioned about all this, much as there is about Nicolas Walter's litany of the founding fathers of secularism whose names - GJ Holyoake, Richard Carlile, RD Owen, Charles Bradlaugh - mean little in today's thoroughly secularised era, which they could only long for.

Prominent figures in the movement are aware of the paradox. Mr Walter gave me a copy of his association's

magazine, *New Humanist*, which carried a wealth of articles with titles such as "Jesus the Fanatic" and "Another Look at Miracles". The lead piece on "The Future of Unbelief" began with the quote: "One of the most obvious and regrettable things about contemporary humanism is that it has become quaint - a movement out of step with the times it has helped to create."

Partly, the writer said, this is because it insists on fighting again battles it has already won: the war against religion, the battle for intellectual freedom, the defence of moral choice, and so on. But he also said that organisations that call themselves secularist, rationalist or humanist nowadays seem old, tired and sadly ineffectual. Most significantly, humanism has been supplanted as the Church's most effective critic - by, of all things, liberal theology.

But it has another problem, too. The movement's beliefs extend well beyond mere utilitarian notions about achieving the greatest good for the greatest number of the population. It makes statements - about the goodness of humanity, freedom, mutuality, art, music, laughter and love - that, ultimately, are based on assertions and instincts rather than empirical fact. Its faith in humanity is, in the end, no less a matter of belief than is any religion.

Nicolas Walter disagrees. "Humanism is not a faith. I don't have faith in freedom. I just want to be free; there's a difference," he says. Similarly,



Atheism in the open air: a humanist wedding ceremony

the feelings aroused by the majesty of nature share nothing, as many suppose, with the instinct of religion: "I feel stirred, and brought to tears, but it's not by the transcendent. Reverence for the universe, as Einstein said, makes no sense. I just try to explain it in biological terms. Why are we musical? What, in Darwinian terms, is it for? Why does it help?"

Darwinism is a double-edged sword here. Biogenetic structuralism now suggests that human beings are genetically programmed for music, language, dance... and religion. We insist on making patterns - of harmony, rhythm and meaning.

More than that, epidemiologists now suggest that people who believe in God are happier than average and

live longer. Religion, it seems, has an evolutionary point.

"Yes, but civilisation goes through stages - and we've reached the stage where we can think for ourselves," says Mr Walter. And there are battles yet to fight. "Christianity still has privileges enshrined in the law. There is the issue of Islam and state schools. And there is all the mumbo-jumbo of the New Age. There are still lots of things still worth arguing about - and if organised humanists don't, no one will."

Whether or not it is "organised humanism" - or the majority of the population's rootless drift along the "line of least resistance" - which has been the real force for secularisation, is matter for another debate. I await the letter with interest.

DAYS LIKE THESE

30 JANUARY 1829

SIR WALTER SCOTT,
novelist, writes to
Benjamin Crocker:

"Miss Seward knew Dr Johnson well... There was a story she told me respecting the Sage's marriage with the widow Porter. He had been quite candid with the lady, and had pointed out to her all his disadvantages. 'I told her,' he said, 'that I was as poor as a rat, and destitute of any settled profession; that I was blind and ugly, and moreover of a family which was dishonoured by the execution of a near relative.' She replied most candidly that all these drawbacks made no difference to her choice; that she was not much richer than myself, and she was resolved to trust to heaven's blessing and my talents for a sufficient income; that if I was unsightly, she was no longer young, and it was not for my good looks that she gave me preference. Finally that, although she had not had an uncle who had been hanged, yet she enjoyed the



relationship of more than one near relative who richly deserved it."

1 FEBRUARY 1901

CISSY, COUNTESS
OF DENBIGH,
records the last journey of
Queen Victoria (pictured)
who died on 22 January

"We steamed out, and took up our position between the last British ship and the first foreign ships of war, on the south side of the double line down which the procession was to pass. The day was one of glorious sunshine, with the smoothest and bluest of seas. After a while a black

torpedo destroyer came dashing down the line signalling that the *Alberta* was leaving Osborne and from every ship, both British and foreign, boomed out the minute guns for close on an hour before the procession reached us. The sun was now (3pm) beginning to sink, and a wonderful golden pink appeared in the sky and as the smoke slowly rose from the guns it settled in one long festoon behind them, over Basing, a purple festoon like the purple banglows ordered by the King.

Then slowly down the long line of battleships came eight torpedo destroyers, dark gliding forms, and after them the white *Alberta* looking very small and frail next to the towering battleships. We could see the motionless figures standing round the white pall which, with the crown and orb and sceptre, lay upon the coffin. As slowly and as silently as it came the cortege passed away into the haze; with the solemn booming of the guns continuing every minute till Portsmouth was reached."

IAN IRVINE

The trial of the vanquished

CLASSIC
PODIUM

From a speech by Senator
Robert Taft, at Kenyon
College, condemning the war
crimes trials of Axis leaders,
as being against the principles
of Anglo-American law
(5 OCTOBER 1946)

I DESIRE today to speak particularly of equal justice, because it is an essential of individual liberty. Unless there is law, and unless there is an impartial tribunal to administer that law, no man can be really free. Without them only force can determine controversy, as in the international field today, and those who have not sufficient force cannot remain free. Without law and an appeal to a just and independent court to interpret that law, every man must be subject to the arbitrary discretion of his ruler or of some subordinate government official.

The Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States and every pronouncement of the founders of the government stated the same principle in one form or another. In England the progress towards a definite law, administered by efficient and impartial courts or tribunals, was slow and uncertain. The common law developed slowly and became clear and definite only after many centuries. For a long time the courts were anything but impartial, and the actual application of the law was often unfair and unjust. But reverence for the principle must have existed, or it would not have been transported so early to the shores of America to become the dominant theory of government in the colonies.

I believe that most Americans view

with discomfort the war trials which have just been concluded in Germany and are proceeding in Japan. They violate that fundamental principle of American law that a man cannot be tried under an *ex post facto* statute.

The trial of the vanquished by the victors cannot be impartial, no matter how it is hedged about with the forms of justice. I question whether the hang-

ing of those who, however despicable, were the leaders of the German people will ever discourage the making of aggressive war; for no one makes aggressive war unless he expects to win. About this whole judgment there is the spirit of vengeance, and vengeance is seldom justice. The hanging of the 11 men convicted will be a blot on the American record which we shall long regret.

In these trials we have accepted the Russian idea of the purpose of trials - government policy and not justice - with little relation to Anglo-Saxon heritage. By clothing policy in the forms of legal procedure, we may discredit the whole idea of justice in Europe for years to come.

In the last analysis, even at the end of a frightful war, we should view the future with more hope if even our enemies believed that we had treated them justly in our English-speaking concept of law, in the provision of relief and in the final disposal of territory. I pray that we do not repeat this procedure in Japan, where the justification on grounds of vengeance is much less than in Germany.

Our whole attitude in the world, for a year after VE Day, including the use of the atomic bomb at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, seems to me a departure from the principles of fair and equal treatment which have made America respected throughout the world before

this Second World War. Today we are cordially hated in many countries. I am delighted that Secretary of State James F. Byrnes and Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg have reversed our policy in many of the respects I have referred to. But, abroad as at home, we have a long way to go to restore again to the American people our full heritage of an ingrained belief in fairness, impartiality, and justice.

Peace in the world can come only if a law is agreed to relating to international relations, if there is a tribunal which can interpret that law and decide disputes between nations, and if the nations are willing to submit their disputes to impartial decision regardless of the outcome.

There can be no peace until the public opinion of the world accepts, as a matter of course, the decisions of an international tribunal.

War has always set back temporarily the ideals of the world. This because of the tremendous scope of the war, the general prevalence of its methods and the effect today is even worse and the duration of the post-war period of disillusionment may be longer.

As I see it, the English-speaking peoples have one great responsibility. That is to restore to the minds of men a devotion to equal justice under law.

THE SATURDAY ESSAY

Can anyone control the flow of ideas in the modern age?



JOHN SUTHERLAND

There is no question that, over the next few decades, the Net will destabilise states and may even start wars

"So you," Abraham Lincoln said on meeting Harriet Beecher Stowe, "are the little woman who wrote the book that made this great war!" The book in question was *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Stop the book, kill the idea at source, and you may change the course of history – the dream of every ruler less benevolent than honest Abe over the last 50 years.

It's not easy to do, and the stakes are high. The KGB, aware of the counter-revolutionary power of books (even home-made samizdats), registered every typewriter in their 10-time-zone territory. Xerox copiers, fax machines and computers were as jealously guarded by the party apparatus as plutonium. The result? The Soviet Union drove itself back into the information dark ages and lost the Cold War. Control ideas too harshly, and you strangle the creative forces that a modern state needs in order to progress. Let them loose and all the geniuses are out of the bottles, causing 20 sorts of hell.

Ideas move history. The new containers that new ideas come in are taken seriously by the governments that wish to stay governments. It is always instructive to look at the communications media that the state is currently most exercised to control. The means of control are not always those classically associated with the 4am bang on the door and men in black. Over the centuries Britain and the United States – non-totalitarian states with liberal traditions of free speech – have shown themselves remarkably efficient in balancing repression and tolerance. It's a balance that is imperilled every time a new medium appears on the scene.

When it appeared in the 15th century the printing press was subjected to immediate regulation. Initially in Britain it was applied by the Star Chamber, Stationers' Hall, and the Lord Chamberlain. In France a complex system of "privileges" or licences was imposed. Traditionally only two potentially dangerous books, the Bible and Hansard, have been subjected to long-term control by licence in Britain. The great university presses, Oxford and Cambridge, established their half-millennial cultural dominance with the Bible privilege. If you want to test the continuing strength of the Hansard monopoly, go into the visitors' gallery at Westminster with a pencil and note pad. You'll be shaken down quicker than a Yemeni going through airport X-ray security with an Uzi in his underpants.

The printing press was dangerous for the state in a number of ways. It allowed the dissemination, on an unprecedentedly massive scale, of dissident ideas. It invaded the state's monopoly of "intelligence". It was a potent instrument of mass education, and a literate population (particularly a self-taught population) is difficult to keep in line. It facilitated the circulation of subversive, blasphemous and pornographic materials, all of which corroded the moral foundations of society and its hierarchies.

Unlike *dirigiste* France, Britain quickly realised that the control of the printed word was best achieved by a network of quasi-legal controls, working in a semi-autonomous way. Copyright, the most elegant of laws, was devised with the Queen Anne copyright Act of 1710. The basic idea of copyright requires an intellectual leap – the notion of "immaterial property". The copyright in the words I am currently writing, though you buy them for less than £1 under the auspices of *The Independent* belong to me – even after 1. *The Independent*



The coffee-houses of 18th century London were clearing houses for radical ideas and political gossip

Mary Evans Picture Library

has paid me for them. 2. you have purchased them, in their material form, from the newsagent. Repeat a substantial part of this article in print, and I can sue you for infringement of my rights, Xerox them and – if I am incredibly small-minded – I can still act against you. What then do I own? The *arrangement* of those words. They can be sold a million times (in your dreams, Sutherland); I still own them.

Copyright was, for the authorities, a beautiful legal instrument. Convert creativity into property and the booksellers (and behind them the authors) will set up the necessary mechanisms to control production and distribution. And British publishers, as Orwell disgustedly discovered (when he vainly tried to get them to accept *Animal Farm*), are by nature "gullible". You want to know what "repressive tolerance" means? Look at the "bible" of the publishing trade, *The Bookseller*.

With the protections of copyright came another beautiful concept – that of "public domain". Once a work's immediate commercial value was exhausted, its ideas became everybody's and nobody's – like the medieval common, the open seas, and the skies above our heads. Shakespeare – the man of the millennium – belongs to us all. So, one day, will Salman Rushdie (by current EU statute, 70 years after his death: of old age and in bed, I trust). The balance between copyright-protected works and public domain, painfully worked out over the half-millennium since print shook everything up, has served liberal democracies very well.

The Internet has changed everything. Worse than this, it is changing things faster than laws and mechanisms can be devised to control it. The authorities are worried and have reason to be. There is no question that, over the next few decades, the Net will destabilise states and may even start wars.

The history is well known. It began, in the Sixties, as a military communications system. The Americans foresaw that a preemptive nuclear strike on Washington could render the US a headless giant. "ArapNet" was devised as a network by which military and government computers could talk to each other; if only two machines were left. Since much military research is done on US campuses, academics started using the network. This was e-mail born. At this point, the communications were limited to linear text.

None of this mattered to the general public in the Seventies. Computers were expensive gadgetry that only the government, big business and universities could afford and only pointy-headed boffins could operate. Personal computers were as fantastic a concept as personal space shuttles. All this changed in the early Eighties when Adam Osborne in America began selling his "luggable" computers in America with bundled software, at a price (then around \$2,000) that the businessman and academic could afford. In Britain Clive Sinclair began selling his little black computers at a price that the nerdy schoolboy could afford (around £150), if he didn't buy himself a BMX.

These early affordable generations of computer, with their 32K or 64K of Random Access Memory, were not Net-connectible. But RAM grew year by year, driven by the need for more powerful business and games applications. In 1991, Tim Berners-Lee, a scientist at CERN the physics research centre in Geneva devised a means by which images and lateral links could be added. Hypertext was born. The initial idea was that the Internet (as it was now called) would allow scientists to exchange "big science" ideas and the visuals that go with them.

Finally, in the late Nineties, there was convergence; the fat was in the fire. The computer available to the general public in High Street shops at around £1,000 was powerful enough to hook into the Internet. The World Wide Web was born. It was an explosive conjunction that put advanced states in the Western World in the anguished position of the KGB in 1988 or the Star Chamber in 1488 – how to control the apparently uncontrollable?

The Web is a threat in four main sectors. First, it drives a coach and horses through copyright legislation. Judging by past experience, what I am now writing will be scanned in and on the Net tomorrow, zooming around between various chat-room subscribers. The Web is no more obedient to the regulations of international or national copyright law than the Barbary Coast was to His Majesty's Customs and Excise officers. Everything is public domain on the Web. And that everything is growing. In the very near future, it will be possible to scan in and download film, TV programmes and whole CDs. Piracy at that point will be uncontrollable, and rampant to an unprecedented degree.

Almost every day you can read articles in the financial supplements wondering at the extraordinary "over-valuation" of Net-related stocks on the Nasdaq list. How is it that AOL and Yahoo! can be valued so highly when they haven't turned in a cent's profit? Because at some point in the near future, there is going to be the biggest gold rush in history, when all that copyright-protected intellectual property (films, TV, books, music) becomes freely available (ie fully pirateable as free download) on the Web. The Klondike and the Calgary Stampede will be as nothing in comparison. It will be champagne for the holders of the right stocks. Black Monday 1929 for the rest of the market. The destabilising implications for capitalism are awesome. It's unavoidable and it's coming soon to a stock-market near you.

The second danger posed by the Web is that having been originated in the US and in a community (science) where English is the lingua franca, it is an extraordinarily potent instrument of imperial hegemony. The Web is American (which is why there is no national domain marker equivalent to ".uk" for their e-mail addresses). Statistics are fluid, but something between 50 and 70 percent of communications are from and to American sites. What then does Tony Blair's "National Grid of Learning" mean? Something equivalent, in cultural terms, to Argentina adopting the dollar as its currency.

Thirdly, and most worrying for authorities, the Web makes nonsense of the mechanisms that are in place for controlling subversive ideas.

These assertions can be demonstrated by three little experiments. Sit down on your computer, log on to your Net service provider, and call up whatever search engine it offers. Experiment One: search for "David Shayler". You will get a website listing for MI5's current Enemy Number One. Stop at this point. Go forward, download some of David's dodgy stuff, and you could find yourself in contravention of the Official Secrets Act.

Experiment Two: choose your favourite pop group (Oasis, Nirvana, REMO). Search. A couple of clicks will get you to a site providing a comprehensive library of lyrics and music. Stop at this point. Go forward, and you could find yourself handling stolen goods.

Experiment three: Search on "fetish", or "bestiality". Select among any one of the

10,000 porn sites for what looks "bardest". Stop at this point. Go forward, and you could find yourself on the wrong side of any number of laws – most seriously, the Child Protection Act. A judge at Cambridge Crown Court, in passing sentence on a lecherous surfer on Wednesday, ruled that downloading images from the Net "amounted to making copies and breached the Act". The fact is, millions of Web users, less prudent than *Independent* readers, won't stop. How many laws can you break at your computer console? A lot more than you can with a motorcar and almost as many as you can with a gun.

One of the films doing well at the moment is *Enemy of the State*, a paranoid thriller. Its narrative gimmick is that the new world of electronics – notably the Web – delivers the Orwellian nightmare of totalitarian control by total surveillance of the population. Individual liberties, dependent as they are on individual privacy, are doomed.

It's nonsense. The Web does not principally threaten individuals; it threatens the state and its rulers – just think what samizdats did to the Soviet Union, and imagine the threat posed by the World Wide Web to the rulers of China. Even the President of the United States needs to worry. Bill Clinton's impeachment woes are substantially Web-driven. Matt Drudge broke the original stained-dress story on his site, when the news magazines wouldn't handle it. After that, every salacious detail was spilled on the Web before being picked up by the "legitimate" press.

As everyone outside the American Senate realises, Clinton's offences are venial peccadilloes. But what if there had been real presidential wrong-doing, something equivalent to Iran-Contra? It was Reagan's good fortune not to have to deal with leaks in cyberspace. His damage could be controlled, just. After Clinton, American presidents will be nervous as cats on hot bricks – unless, that is, some means can be found to control not "the media", but "that medium".

Those means will be found, as they always have been in the past. A new balance between repression and tolerance will be established. But in the meantime, the ride is going to be interestingly bumpy.

The writer is Lord Northcliffe professor of modern English literature at the University of London

BAROMETER

SEAN O'GRADY

Homophobe of the week?

Jamie Cann, MP for Ipswich, the man who this week turned Hansard into a gay *Kama Sutra*. During the Commons debate on the age of consent he began with some rather jovial remarks about his own sex life, in which he confided that, at 52, "sex counts for 1 or 2 per cent of my life nowadays – on holiday, perhaps 5 per cent". However, he then went on to an obsessive and detailed description of homosexual erotic practices which provoked widespread embarrassment. His distaste for such practices was more than apparent. Now, there's one politician who'll never get shafted.



Nazi pigeon of the week

Nazi-trained bombing pigeons were the target of British covert operations during the last war according to some recently released MI5 files. Heinrich Himmler, mass murderer and president of the German National Pigeon Society, had the bright idea of recruiting these birds to carry intelligence from German sympathisers in England. Our spies got to find this out from "captured pigeon personnel".

The shabby Nazi plan was thwarted by the Army Pigeon Service Special Section, comprising two patriotic peregrine falcons. Indeed, a couple of pigeons were captured, and the secret files note that: "Both birds are now prisoners of war and are working hard at breeding English pigeons."

Never in the field of conflict has so much been owed by so many to so few birds of prey.



Criminal of the week

Have you seen this cut-out? Staffordshire Police have had some trouble tracking the "flat-cap robber". He has been holding up banks, but his nondescript appearance has helped him to evade detection. The police have now resorted to carting this life-size cardboard cut-out around shopping malls. Keep 'em peeled.



Beetle of the week

Have you seen this insect? The Asian longhorn beetle is extremely destructive and capable of wiping out many of our

fine trees, such as the horse chestnut and the willow. It must be found. Anyone can join the Insect Service Special Section. Here is a life-size cut-out to help you...

Image of the week

At a rally for Catholic youth during his visit to the United States, Pope John Paul II was presented with a St Louis Blues hockey stick and jersey. Nice to see that the pontiff hasn't lost his sense of humour.



Holden: Ab-Fab lifestyle

WENDY HOLDEN lived the Ab-Fab lifestyle on *Tatler* magazine and decided to draw on the torrid, solipsistic world she discovered there for her recent novel, *Simply Divine*. As a result she has now found herself the subject of the same glossy pages; she has become the literary equivalent of an It Girl, gracing the pages of tabloid and broadsheet alike. The media attention may be because the subject is close to many a journalist's heart and they are curious to determine whether, in fact, they make an appearance in the book. Wendy, however, claims that it was due to her willingness to be proactive in publicising the book. "And the fact that there wasn't a third world war going on. Plus January is a miser-

able time and I think people want glamour and fun."

In the book really a roman-à-clef? No, I don't think that is what people are interested in really. It's meant to be good fun and a jolly read, a bit of a romp.

That's what the average reader is after? Absolutely. I don't think the public is anxious to read about journalists in London. I think they just want to read something that's fun.

But you did draw on your own media experience? Oh, sure. But it was such good material. The really bizarre things

in the book were too bizarre to make up. But the characters are only amalgamations of different people rather than portraits of real people I knew and worked with.

Are you consciously mocking the fashion business? Well, yes. Of course there is a certain amount of mockery. But there is a fine line between mockery and celebration.

COLD CALL

SALLY CHATTERTON RINGS
WENDY HOLDEN

You are always looking for the new rather than enjoying the present in fashion. Does that make it a bit unsatisfying?

Well, I quite enjoyed all the "What's the new black? What's the new gardening". It all struck me as being rather good fun.

Does that constant desperation for something new and better define the Nineties reader?

I think people on magazines probably think that's what people want to know. But I think they only want to read about it. It doesn't define their lifestyle.

What defines the Nineties woman? Well, no one thing, really. I suppose we know more about more things. We're far more pressurised these days. You know – career, lurve. We have to be superstars on all fronts. Everything we do has to be a success.

Why do you think that is the case? I'm not entirely sure but I would say that we have witnessed a fascinating progression from the terribly serious feminist in the Seventies, to

the careerist, power-shouldered, ball-breaking women of the Eighties, to the typical Nineties woman who would certainly seem to be a rather harmless party girl.

You would characterise Nineties women as being harmless? I think the It Girls are symbols of our age. They've made a fortune out of being famous for being famous. They've got a lot out of life.

What will the millennium heroine be like?

I hope the stereotype of the unhappy single girl will die. Hopefully she'll stop thinking in a gender specific way. In fact I think that she'll be a go-getter.

Lady Glendevon

AS THE only child of William Somerset Maugham, perhaps the century's grumpiest writer, and Syrie, his wife turned society decorator, Liza Glendevon's life was complicated even before its conception. As the First World War was declared and Maugham left England for France (where he would meet and fall in love with the disastrous Gerald Haxton), Syrie, then still married to Henry Wellcome, became pregnant and Maugham accepted responsibility. In the event, Syrie Wellcome miscarried; a second pregnancy quickly followed, and produced their daughter, Elizabeth Mary, by emergency Caesarean, on 5 May 1915.

Maugham married her mother two years later, in Jersey City. As Bryan Cannon notes in *Somerset and All the Maughams* (1966), Maugham's attitude to his daughter would ever be complex: his wife would later accuse him, "When you asked me to have a child, you said you wanted a child but you lied; you didn't want a child, you only wanted to be a father." His daughter's birth seemed to underline the threat Maugham felt from women. He wrote to a friend, congratulating him on the birth of his son. "We can all write books, but it is given to but few to produce a male child. I have never been able to manage more than a daughter."

The Maughams' doomed match soon came apart. Separated in 1923, the couple divorced four years later. Syrie Maugham was given £600 per annum to bring up their daughter. She tried to ignore her ex-husband's vindictive attitude, according to David Herbert's *Second Son* (1972), for Liza's sake: "Syrie was determined to show him she could earn her own living and support both herself and their beloved daughter..."

Her mother's strange state - somewhere between hostess and businesswoman - introduced Liza, as she became known (after her father's best-selling novel *Liza of Lambeth*), to the glitterati of the day, potential customers for Syrie & Co's trademark lined Louis Quinze chairs and plush lambskin carpets. This was the environment in which Liza Maugham grew up: Noel Coward, who called her Liza Boo, com-

posing songs in her mother's house, Cecil Beaton photographing her, and Beverly Nichols gossiping about her. "Liza is a perfect darling," effused Beaton of the 13-year-old. "I adore her. She is unique, wise, sophisticated and yet very childish." David Herbert declared unequivocally that Syrie's "adoration of Liza was touching and her whole life revolved around her."

Photographed in a characteristically Surreal pose by Madame Yevonde in 1935 - displaying her ivory skin and bright blue eyes - Liza Maugham remained firmly in the fashion spotlight. She dressed with such *outré* designers of the day as Charles James, gave numerous interviews, and, when on one occasion she drove in a sports car through London, it was reported in a newspaper under the headline "Hatless in Berkeley Square" as a daring fashion gesture.

In 1936 she married Vincent Paravicini, son of the Swiss Minister to the Court of St James, at St Mar-

gar's, Westminster. "Is it a C.B. Cochran first night?" mused the *Express's* "William Hickey". "No, it's an issue of *Vogue* come to life." Dressed by Schiaparelli, she was "bride of the month", surrounded by royalty, aristocracy, Osbert Sitwell, Elsie de Wolfe and Marie Tempest. At the reception at the Swiss Legation, a cake designed by Oliver Messel was the centrepiece. Maugham's wedding present was a portfolio of shares, a house near Henley, and the lease of 15 Wilton Street - which had been decorated by Syrie.

The couple honeymooned in the Villa Mauresque, lent to them by Maugham for the occasion. He appeared to approve of the match: Paravicini was considered one of the best-looking men in London and, as Ted Morgan records in his biography

her at a cocktail party and told her, "Please do thank your daddy for Mildred; it was like having an acting textbook to guide me" - Davis's appearance in the film version of Maugham's *Of Human Bondage* had established her as a star.

Liza and her son and daughter returned to England in 1944. Paravicini, now a lieutenant-colonel in an armoured car unit serving in New Guinea, had proved a gambler and a drinker when he returned to the US in 1943, suffering from malaria. After Liza and her children returned to England the following year, the couple divorced. In 1948 she married Lord John Hope, the 36-year-old son of the second Marquess of Linlithgow, a stolid Conservative politician who would take the title of Baron Glendevon in 1964 after ser-

vice in the Commonwealth and Scottish Offices. A son, Julian (the present Lord Glendevon), was born in 1950; another, Jonathan, in 1952.

Syrie Maugham died in July 1955, nursed by her daughter; her death "heralded Willie's decline into senility" as Cannon writes. The year before Maugham had formed a company to take over the Villa Mauresque and given Liza the shares. This legal ruse now became, in his mind, a means by which he would be thrown out of his own home. It was just one example "of a childish illogicality influenced and encouraged by Alan Searle [WSM's secretary and lover, whom he would adopt as a son] who saw Liza as a rival and feared for his financial future after Willie's death..." According to Searle, Willie wrote a new will each week.

Relations reached a nadir in 1962 with the imminent publication of Maugham's memoirs, *Looking Back*, in which it was rumoured he denied - "in a characteristically reptilian statement" as Rebecca West saw it - paternity of Liza. He did not, but he did declare her to be illegitimate. Scarcely had this furore died down when, insisting he was near peacocks, Maugham sold 35 paintings at Sotheby's; unfortunately, nine of them had been assigned to Liza in return for her signing away rights to his royalties.

She could not understand what had turned her father against her: "Dearest Daddy, you are making me quite miserable by refusing to see me..." How can you suddenly turn on me when I have done absolutely nothing? The situation may have been explained by a bitter comment made by Maugham to Alan Searle: "The trouble with those two [the John Hopes] is that they're too damned happy"; and by the fact that Maugham was already suffering the effects of Alzheimer's.

Partly persuaded by her husband, Liza Hope sued Sotheby's for the proceeds of the paintings belonging to her Peter Wilson, the auctioneer, informed the press that this was "a family dispute. It has nothing to do with us." The publication of *Looking Back* did little to help matters.

In 1962 began the extraordinary legal action in which Maugham's lawyers issued a statement announcing their client's decision to sue to deny legal recognition of Lady John Hope, saying she was the legal daughter of Henry Wellcome, and proposing to revoke all gifts to her, including shares in the Villa Mauresque company under Article 950 of the French civil code. In a perverse inversion, he further stated that his daughter had never taken care of him, "and that her claim to the paintings constituted ingratitude." The *Daily Telegraph* reported that Lady John Hope was "shocked, surprised and absolutely mystified", adding, "When people get very old they become a little strange sometimes."



The only child of Somerset Maugham - a portrait by Madame Yevonde

Camera Press

was heard in Nice in June, and the court declared her to be Maugham's legitimate daughter, and ordered the adoption of Searle to be annulled. Maugham appealed, and lost. A joint statement was issued: "Mr W.S. Maugham and his daughter, Lady John Hope, are happy to state that all differences between them have been settled."

Maugham died on 15 December 1963, although it took Alan Searle 24 hours to inform Lady Glendevon (as she had become) of the fact. She finally inherited the Villa Mauresque. The house was subsequently sold for development.

Liza Glendevon's life with her second husband was indeed a happy one. She was not, however, a typical Tory wife, but always maintained her own spin on the events in her

extraordinary life. David Herbert thought her "a kind and thoughtful wife, and an understanding and gentle mother". It is evident she inherited few of her irascible father's genes. Living on the Wilton estate, and in Guernsey, the couple "enjoyed the friendship". In Hugo Vickers's words, of senior members of the Royal Family, Lord Glendevon died in 1996; his widow returned to London to live in Eaton Square.

PHILIP HOARE

Elizabeth Mary Maugham; born Rome 1 September 1915; married 1936 Vincent Paravicini (one son, one daughter; marriage dissolved); 1948 Lord John Hope (created 1964 Baron Glendevon, died 1996; two sons); died Hopetoun, Lothian 27 December 1998.

James Towler

JAMES TOWLER, who was Chairman of the Transport Users Consultative Committee for Yorkshire from 1979 to 1985 and for all North-East England, 1985-87, was a man of strongly independent mind. He represented railway passengers in a skilled and high-profile way, and played a crucial role in the 1980s in saving from closure the Settle and Carlisle railway.

Bob Cryer, the late MP for Keighley, described him as "a 19th-century Whig with a radical edge". Towler was recognised by press and public across the North of England as the strongest-ever official defender of rail users, while being seen by some (but not all) British Rail managers, and by Conservative ministers, as an unwelcome persistent critic. He enjoyed recounting how one told him, "The trouble with you is that you travel on too many trains." Managers, he realised, did not travel on their trains enough. His approach to public transport needs of ordinary people remains of central importance in the era of the Labour government's "New Deal for the Railways".

Until Towler's appointment in 1979, BR had had an easy ride from the "toothless watchdog" committees. He dramatically raised the Yorkshire TUC's profile and ended its subservience to BR, breaking a practice that had given the TUC a poor reputation in the Beeching era for not resisting closures.



'Whig with a radical edge'

An early success was the transfer of diesel High Speed Trains on to the Sheffield-London route, left out of Intercity modernisation in the 1970s "The Age of the Train" under Sir Peter Parker. Towler joined Sheffield City Council, working as BR out of a "Waiting for Godot" stance that only electrification of the Midland Main Line would bring better services. Subsequently he did much to encourage growth in West and South Yorkshire local rail services, working to smooth over difficulties between the local Passenger Transport Executives and BR.

With the contentious Serpell Report on Railway Finances publishing options for major network

cutbacks in 1982, closures were no longer off the agenda. Towler's TUC found itself handling objections to the axing of the Sheffield-Pennine-Huddersfield line serving south Pennine communities, and of the Goole swingbridge, which would have cut the main line from the south into Hull. Both continued in service after negotiation with local authorities, Towler working behind the scenes.

When Towler first faced up to BR's proposed closure of the Settle-Carlisle line, the 72-mile "finest scenic route in England", there was a sense of doom over rural railways. There were few at first who believed it could be saved.

Towler's crucial role was that he slowed down the process by challenging BR to produce justification for closure, which it never could, and bought time for the national movement to gather to save the line. He found legal faults in BR's procedures, and closure notices were reissued more than once: what he called the "Battle of the Small Print". And he rigorously and relentlessly presented the facts of a complex and controversial public issue to an impatient, often indifferent and largely ignorant government.

While more politically favoured chairmen were regularly reappointed, Towler was refused a new term at the height of his reputation in March 1987, causing angry Commons exchanges. He had taken his

committee's legal powers and duty seriously, and it had "strongly and emphatically" recommended the closure of the Settle-Carlisle line be refused. Both BR and the Department of Transport wanted him out: a hapless consumer affairs minister, Lord Lucas, obliged.

After his report to ministers in December 1986 and his subsequent sacking, he was elected Chairman of the Railway Development Society in Yorkshire, cheerfully describing his job as having been privatised. He carried on in his polite, patient but determined way, speaking for passengers and fighting to save the Settle-Carlisle line. After a confused attempt by the Government in 1988 to "privatise or close" it, Paul Channon, the Transport Secretary, harassed by a set of transport disasters, refused closure on 16 April 1989. Towler told the story in *The Battle for the Settle & Carlisle* (1990).

Towler lived to see the reversal of rail cutbacks: the Settle-Carlisle line now carries modern local trains serving reopened local stations and is again being heavily used by freight. Less happily, he watched the emasculation of the TUC after his dismissal, initially by weaker appointments. Their reorganisation in the 1994 rail privatisation led to imposition of a deadening bureaucracy and departure of staff and members knowledgeable about railways. In July 1998 it was, however,

announced that users' committees will move to the Strategic Rail Authority and be strengthened.

Born in 1932, Towler was the only son of a West Riding businessman. He left school at 15 and followed his enthusiasm for films by working as a junior cinema manager before joining the family engineering business. He was later chairman of a plant manufacturer and a director of Pennine Radio, West Yorkshire's first commercial station. He was an enthusiast for light entertainment, and had a long association with *The Stage*, reporting on performers throughout Yorkshire, as well as reviewing television in later years. An opponent of Britain's EEC entry in the early 1970s, he was drawn into regional CBI activities: the CBI nominated him to the Yorkshire TUC. Local broadcasting experience made him an excellent writer and speaker.

He married Muriel Myers in 1956. She was a constant support to him throughout his campaigning for rail users: "You have to laugh, don't you?" was her regular comment on the absurd actions of officialdom.

MARK SULLIVAN

James Drummond Towler; railway users' representative and businessman; born Shipley, Yorkshire 31 December 1932; married 1956 Muriel Myers (one son); died Leeds 26 November 1998.

Oscar Cullmann

OSCAR CULLMANN, the Protestant theologian and New Testament scholar, was one of this century's ecumenical pioneers. A lay member of the (Lutheran) Church of the Augsburg Confession of Alsace and Lorraine, he became involved in dialogue with Catholic and Orthodox as far back as the 1920s - long before it became fashionable.

His openness to Christians of other denominations helped forge a true ecumenical spirit in the theological faculty of Basle University, where he taught from 1938 to 1972 as Professor of New Testament and Ancient Christian History.

Born in Strasbourg in 1902, he studied at the university there and at the Sorbonne in Paris. He taught at Strasbourg University from 1927 to 1938 before being appointed to Basle, where he spent the bulk of his time until he retired at 70. He showed a great commitment to the students, running a hostel for theological students with his sister Louise. In 1968-69 he served as Rector.

From 1948 he also served as Professor of Protestant Theology at the Sorbonne, as well as teaching courses at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes in Paris and at the Waldensian seminary in Rome. But his greatest influence came from his guest lectures around the world and his writing. In his long career he completed more than 100 titles (one of which describes the origins of the Christmas tree).

Among his more influential works were *Christ and Time* and *Baptism in the New Testament* (both published in English translation in 1950), *Salvation in History* (1967 in English) and *The Christology of the New Testament* (1959 in English). His last book was *Prayer in the New Testament* (1994).

Cullmann argued that what is most distinctive about the New Testament is its view of time and history. Running through the course of world history has been a relatively narrow stream of sacred history, at the key point of which is Jesus Christ. He believed this provided the clue to understanding the whole of history.

He also wrote a number of works focused on a theological understanding of ecumenism. Many of these concerned relations between the Protestant and Catholic Churches, such as *Catholics and Protestants: a proposal for realising Christian solidarity* (British publication 1960) and *Vatican Council II: the new direction* (1968).

Cullmann's views, especially on the role of St Peter, outlined in his book *Peter - Disciple, Apostle, Martyr* (1952) were well received in the Vatican. At a time when contacts at the highest level were unusual, he



Protestant to the Pope

was received by Popes Pius XII, John XXIII and, above all, Paul VI. The Protestant theologian Karl Barth used to say teasingly, "Oscar, on your gravestone it will say, 'Here lies the adviser to three popes'!" Cullmann's conversations with Paul VI gave rise to the plan for an ecumenical institute in Jerusalem, founded at Tantur in 1972.

Cullmann had attended the Second Vatican Council of 1962-65 as an observer and had recorded his impressions of the Council. Thirty years later, in 1993, he was the first Protestant to receive the Pope Paul VI Prize, presented to him by Cardinal Carlo Martini of Milan.

Despite his firm commitment to ecumenism, he was not a supporter of a new "World Unity Church" to bring together all Christians. His 1986 book *Unity Through Diversity*, which summed up his lifetime experience, argued instead for a "community of autonomous churches".

As he declared in 1972, ecumenism aimed at fusing the churches would not only destroy the true unity in the Holy Spirit, but would lead Christians of different denominations to the temptation to abandon the foundations of their faith and to seek the principle of unity outside this faith. "Only an ecumenism that respects the diversity of charisms can unite us in Christ, while at the same time leading the Christian churches of all denominations back to the sources of the Christian faith."

The current troubles of the World Council of Churches, where many Orthodox Churches have been questioning their continued membership over the perceived liberal Protestant agenda of the organisation, demonstrate how timely Cullmann's message remains.

FELIX CORLEY

Oscar Cullmann, theologian; born Strasbourg, Germany 25 February 1902; Professor of New Testament and Ancient Church History, Basle University 1938-72; died Cham, France 18 January 1999.

Oswald Jones

DURING THE Fifties and Sixties, Oswald Jones photographed both the up-and-coming and the arrived of the London arts world: his list of portraits reads like a page from *Who's Who*.

Among his subjects were the playwrights Brendan Behan, Bernard Kops, Michael Hastings, J.P. Donleavy, John Osborne and Andrew Sinclair. The novelists included Doris Lessing, Bernice Rubens, Colin Wilson, Henry Williamson, Lynn Reid Banks, Eva Figes, Raymond Williams, Laura Del Rivo, Ann Quin and Alan Burns. There were actors and theatre critics, musicians, composers, poets, cartoonists, art dealers, a film director or two, comedians, politicians and even one photographer - John Deakin. Much of his work was commissioned - Joan Flowright on stage at the Royal Court, and Norman Wisdom for the *Daily Mail*

- though many of his subjects were friends.

He was brought up in the London Welsh world, born to a Welsh father and a Scottish mother in Paddington in 1929. At an early age he acquired a box camera. Later he enrolled at the Regent Street Polytechnic School of Photography and did his National Service in the RAF. "I wanted to be a photographer so they made me a mechanic," he later remarked.

After National Service he joined the staff of Condé Nast, where he enjoyed working on architectural features, but avoided fashion photography. He left in the early 1960s, to work from a studio in St John's Wood. (It was there he met Michael Hastings, then a road sweeper.)

Jones's photographs appeared in the national papers and magazines and a shot of Brendan Behan in a pub in Blackheath provided an early break. The writer had refused

to allow the American Irving Penn to photograph him - and bawled him out of the pub - as the latter had refused an offer of a pint. Jones turned up an hour later and got both. The American and British editions of *Vogue* used the picture - the Americans paid him \$100, the British £5.

For much of the 1960s he worked on documentaries in Africa and Turkey for British television. He and his colleagues came under fire in Angola while on patrol with the Portuguese army. They were later arrested as, being bearded, they were assumed to be Cubans.

In Zanzibar he photographed Che Guevara surrounded by bodyguards. "I did not approach too closely," Che was there to support the revolution against the Sultan. A year later Jones had talks in Dar-es-Salaam with rebels from the Congo with a view to photographing the conflict there. This came to nothing. Many of

the South African mercenaries in the conflict were also bearded and one leaned across the table and said to Jones, "It will have to come off."

When he returned to London in the 1970s the freelance market had collapsed and he taught architectural photography at Guildford School of Art. He was based for much of the time at Rolston in Hereford, moving to Capel-y-felin, Powys, where a loose artistic community had emerged. He settled in Abergavenny in the early 1980s and worked on the *Abergavenny Chronicle* 1984-95, until cataracts forced his retirement.

Inspired by Schubert's *Winterreise*, Ossie Jones published a collection of photos with poetry by Frances Horowitz and Roger Garfitt as an act of homage to South Wales. *Winterreise: an exhibition of landscape photographs by Oswald Jones* (1982) accompanied an exhibition at Canterbury Cathedral. In 1997, an



'It will have to come off'

exhibition of his portraits was held in Swansea. He gave his collection to the Abergavenny Museum.

T. J. WALKER

Oswald David Lloyd Jones; photographer; born London 16 January 1929; married 1955 Marjorie Williamson (marriage dissolved 1959); died Abergavenny 28 December 1998.

John Milnes-Smith

THE ARTIST and architect John Milnes-Smith was one of the pre-Second World War generation who took part in the optimistic resurgence of British art in the 1930s.

He was trained as an architect, studying from 1934 to 1938 at the Architectural Association, and qualifying in 1939. During the war he served with the 14th Army and in Burma. After it, he worked in private practice as an architect and became a specialist in planning regulations, specifically in the field of conservation and preservation of historic buildings. From 1963 to 1978 he worked with the Historic Buildings Division of the Greater London Council.

Milnes-Smith began to paint in the late 1940s in a representational style, but soon moved towards abstraction. In 1951 he took part in a pioneering exhibition, "British Abstract Art", at Gimpel Fils in London. He participated in many group shows in the 1950s including the London Group, the Institute of Contemporary Arts, the Redfern Gallery, Lords Gallery and the Artists' International Association (AIA). In 1952 he was included in "The Mirror and the Square" at the AIA, an exhibition encompassing both social realism (the "mirror") and constructive abstraction (the "square").

In 1957 he was one of the exhibitors in "Metaphysical, Tachiste, Abstract" at the Redfern, alongside most of the key exponents of British abstract painting of the time. Held the year after the first wave of American Abstract Expressionism arrived in Britain, as part of "Modern Art in the United States" at the Tate Gallery, it can be seen retrospectively as a seminal showing. In 1959, another influential Tate exhibition, "New American Painting", strengthened the impact of the Abstract Expressionists.

Milnes-Smith's paintings of the 1950s have a European flavour, close in spirit to that of the Scottish artist William Gear, a member of the Cobra Group, and the French artist Alfred Manessier, both of whose paintings utilised a linear armature containing areas of strong colour. In a review of Milnes-Smith's first one-man show at the New Vision Centre Gallery in 1959, Ian Forbes White wrote that "the forms of Milnes-Smith's paintings are held together by a framework of black lines, and for the most part squares of luminous colours positively flying out of a background of cloudy 'dys or ochre browns'".

By the late 1950s, Milnes-Smith's paintings had become more emotional and gestural – his response to the pervasive influence of the Abstract Expressionists. Like them he worked on a flat surface, but his "arena" was relatively domestic in scale – a table

rather than the floor, in a room in his home. His works were modest in size compared to those produced by the Americans but, as Marina Vaitzey pointed out in the catalogue for his 1990 show at Austin Desmond, "their explorations of space are grand as well as intimate".

In 1958 Milnes-Smith was included in "British Abstract Painting" at the Auckland City Art Gallery, New Zealand, in 1961 he was one of "Eight British Artists" (Terry Frost, Patrick Heron, Peter Lanyon, Alan Davie, Elisabeth Frink, Kenneth Armitage, and Jack Smith were the others) at the Jefferson Place Gallery in Washington, DC. He was a member of the Central Committee of the AIA 1962-64. In the late 1950s he began to produce collages, combining torn scraps of printed and plain paper with crayon lines reminiscent of the graphisme of Roger Hilton. He used ephemera such as old gallery invitations, paint charts, fragments of documents, scraps of discarded drawings and paintings, even attaching paper and card to the back-ground support with pins. These works, made intuitively, have an almost casual, effortless effect, as well as great vitality and sophistication. His collages of

His collages – using old invitations, paint charts, scraps of drawings – have an almost casual, effortless effect

recent years retained this freshness and sense of élan.

In 1963 he had a one-man exhibition at the Drian Gallery. It was the beginning of a long association, and he exhibited there regularly for over 20 years. In 1980 he was one of the artists selected by Halima Nalecz, the Drian's director, for the collection she donated to the Gdansk National Museum in Poland.

Milnes-Smith last exhibited at the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition in 1998. Ten years earlier he showed with England & Co with another artist in "Reflections of the Fifties", and later in the same year took part in "Post-War British Abstract Art" at Austin Desmond, where he had a retrospective in 1990. Throughout the 1990s he contributed to numerous group exhibitions at England & Co, the last in August 1998.

He was genuinely – and generously



Explorations of space 'grand as well as intimate' Jane England

interested in the work of other artists, and with his wife Monica attended gatherings and exhibitions throughout his life. He constantly looked at other artists' work, and subtly absorbed the influence of those he particularly admired. He was attracted by the work of European artists such as Jean Dubuffet, Auguste Herbin, Asger Jorn and Alfred Manessier and among British artists, the work of Prunella Clough, Victor Pasmore, Eduardo Paolozzi and Alan Davie. Davie was one of the first artists he came to know well; other artist friends included William Scott, Fred Uhlman and FE MacWilliam.

John Milnes-Smith was consistent in his interests and aesthetic late last year he was delighted when his wife gave him a small work by Prunella Clough he had admired at an exhibition at the Annelly Juda Gallery. He liked to live with

works by other artists, and moved drawings and small paintings around his home as he could study and see them afresh. He looked at his own works in the same way, sometimes using a mirror to see them from a different angle, putting recent pictures into old frames and hanging them on the stairs so he could see them in passing and decide on any changes. He was always revisiting his pictures, painting over them again and again, their surfaces growing ever richer and more textured. His own work continually evolved and developed – he painted until the end of his life.

JANE ENGLAND

John Milnes-Smith, artist and architect: born Laleham, Middlesex 8 August 1912; married 1939 Monica Bishop (one son, one daughter); died London 20 December 1998.

LITERARY NOTES

IAN RANKIN

A whodunit is born every 13 hours

IF THE end of the Cold War all but killed off the spy novel, what are we to make of the continuing success of the detective story? Not only is it abundant in bookshops and libraries and on best-seller lists, but television drama would be bereft without its Moroses, Wexfords, Frosts, Wyllifies and Cadfaels – all derived from novels.

In fact, on the surface the crime-writing industry is booming. The author and commentator Mike Ripley has calculated that a new crime novel will be published in the UK every 13 hours during the first quarter of this year, and that well over 500 new titles will have appeared by the time Hogmanay comes round. Of these, roughly 40 per cent will be by American authors such as Grisham and Cornwell, but that still leaves room for a flourishing British crime industry. What's more, of last year's hundred top paperback best-sellers – fiction and non-fiction combined – over 40 could be classified as crime or thriller.

These days one assumes that the whodunit genre died out with the likes of Christie, Sayers and Allingham. But in fact young writers are being attracted to the form because of their love of the hard-boiled American mentality: Elmore Leonard's dialogue, James Ellroy's characters. They may never have read a traditional whodunit, but they could

major in the screenplays of Quentin Tarantino.

Circumstance and society are often their motivating force. So long as drug-taking remains an illegal activity, those who write about a community of drug-takers will feel bound to have crime on their minds. But crime writers are also finding that the form gives them certain freedoms. In writing about crime, we are writing about the social order at the end of our century. Being "entertainment" does not mean whodunits cannot carry serious messages, too; it just means they find a good-sized audience for that message.

This "second Golden Age" of crime fiction can be measured not only by the amount of print available or the prevalence of detectives on our screens. For a long time, London boasted only one specialist shop selling whodunits. Today there are three. New crime magazines and fanzines are springing up, too, and the UK can now boast its own annual crime fiction convention, "Dead on Deansgate".

The whodunit was first pronounced dead sometime around 1938, yet has always been capable of reinvention and regeneration. Each new generation of writers brings with it a new readership, though why those readers are attracted to the form is another question entirely. We live in a society which is becoming ever less crime-

ridden (if the statistics are to be believed). Were there to be a correlation with the spy story, then the crime novel should currently be in decline, unless it's true that, despite the figures, our actual fear of crime is greater than ever. It all depends on why readers open a Rendell or the latest Minette Walters. Primarily, as was ever the case, they do so for a good story, something gripping and involving and pacy. There's also the vicarious thrill of pain and panic which they can feel without having to experience at first hand.

Over the past 40 years or so, the move in the British crime novel has been away from Marpleland and towards a more realistic portrayal of crime and its consequences. Often this has meant using police detectives as heroes rather than the amateur of old, an assertion any week's television scheduling will corroborate. But Britain's "new wave" writers feel constrained by this, and many have begun writing from the criminal's perspective, or from the point of view of a new breed of private eye. Quite a few even choose to set their books in the United States – either in homage to writers they admire, or because they have one eye on an American sales market. Or maybe just to show that they can.

Ian Rankin is the author of 'Dead Souls' (Orion, £9.99)

Judge Bruce Griffiths

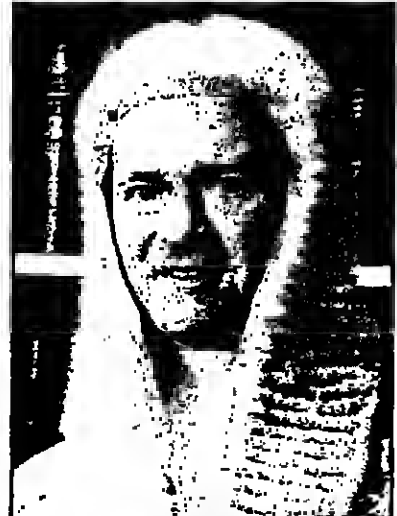


ONE OF the most distinguished members of the judiciary in Wales, Judge Griffiths had a reputation as a hard-working, fair-minded judge on the Wales and Chester circuit where he sat from 1972 until his retirement in 1986. He also played a prominent part in the cultural affairs of Wales.

His greatest passion was for the visual arts. He was particularly enthusiastic about modern Welsh art, filling his home at Whitechurch, a suburb of north Cardiff, with canvases and busts by contemporary practitioners, many of whom became friends.

He was appointed to the Welsh Arts Council in 1972 and to chairmanship of its Art Committee three years later. He spoke with authority and eloquence on behalf of visual artists, summoning all his barrister's skills to argue his committee's case for a greater allocation of the council's funds and taking every opportunity of ensuring that Welsh art was promoted at home and abroad. From 1981 to 1992 he was Chairman of the Welsh Sculpture Trust and did much to encourage an art-form which many regarded as still, in Wales, in its infancy.

But it was as a leading member of the Contemporary Art Society for Wales that he left the most lasting impression. Chairman from 1987 to 1992, and Vice-



No truck with the second-rate

Chairman thereafter, he led the society in its task of commissioning and exhibiting the work of living painters with inspirational panache. He was instrumental in bringing a number of European artists to Wales. His only public reward for this selfless work was a silver medal presented to him, somewhat incongruously, on behalf of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1986.

Griffiths was born in 1924 at Barry in the old county of Glamorgan, although his family had strong connections with Aberdare. Educated at Whitcomb Grammar School in Cardiff and at King's College London, he served with the RAF until 1947 and, after demobilisation, was called to the Bar at Gray's Inn in 1952. He was a founder-member of the Bow Group, which was intended to be an effective counter to the Fabian Society and served as its first chairman.

Although not Welsh-speaking, Griffiths thought of himself as a patriot, but one concerned with the highest standards and having no truck with the merely parochial or the second-rate, and he chose to follow a legal career in Wales. From 1964 to 1970 he was Chairman of the Local Appeals Tribunal of the Ministry of Social Security in Cardiff and from 1968 to 1972 Vice-Chairman of the Mental Health Tribunal, Wales. He was appointed Assistant Recorder of Birkbeck in 1965 and served in the same capacity in Cardiff, Swansea and Merthyr Tydfil from 1966 to 1971. Before taking silk in 1970, he was Deputy Chairman of Glamorgan Quarter Sessions and Commissioner of the Assize Roll Courts of Justice in London.

He was also well-read in English poetry. Every Christmas he would make

a small anthology of his favourite poems which he sent to a select number of his friends. He suffered from asthma and spent part of the year in Mallorca, where one of his sons lives. During our last conversation, he told me with great pride that his grandchildren spoke four languages: English, Welsh, Catalan and Castilian. His wife, Mary, herself the daughter of a judge, has learned Welsh, as has their son David.

Central to Bruce Griffiths's work as a judge and his support for the visual and plastic arts in Wales was his Christian faith, which he expressed in his devotion to the Anglican Church. A regular communicant at St Mary's in Whitchurch, he was a member of the Governing Body of the Church in Wales from 1978 to 1992 and President of its Provincial Council from 1979 to 1992. He was also Chancellor to the Diocese of Monmouth until ill-health forced him to give up many of his public offices.

MEIC STEPHENS

Bruce Fletcher Griffiths, judge: born Barry, Glamorgan 28 April 1924; called to the Bar, Gray's Inn 1952; QC 1970; judge on the Wales and Chester circuit 1972-86; married 1952 Mary Jenkins (two sons, one daughter); died Cardiff 17 January 1999.

There should be nothing holy about matrimony

THE TIME has come for marriage to be demoted. The Church should admit it got it wrong when, in the 13th century, it declared it to be a sacrament. The Church of England should quit saying marriage is a "way of life created and hallowed by God". It should take marriage down from its pedestal and rank it alongside magistrates' courts or the Houses of Parliament. It may be the backbone of our society but it is an institution made by man none the less.

This week church leaders in Birmingham accused a local radio station of reducing a "sacred and momentous decision to a media event". BRMB, an independent radio station, organised a competition called "Two Strangers and a Wedding". It was entered by about 100 men and 100 women who wanted to be married but hadn't got there via dating.

Psychologists and counsellors were brought in to assess what entrants were the most compatible with each other. The winners were rewarded with an all-expenses-paid wedding, a honeymoon in the Bahamas, a posh rent-free flat for a year and a snazzy car. When Carla Germaine and Greg Cordell married on Monday they had never seen each other before.

The clergy were right. It was a media event and BRMB was milking it. The idea of two people marrying before they met is so counter to modern Western culture that the nation was agog. But were the clerics right to say it was sacred?

Marriage has a grubby history which is easier to explain by saying it was designed by man for the benefit of hordes, than that it was created by our maker. In Old Testament times men were entitled to have several wives but women couldn't take their pick of husbands. In the days of the New Testament a man could divorce a woman but a woman couldn't divorce her man. Until relatively recently in the history of marriage, when a woman said "I do", she lost the right to her name, her body, her property and access to the law.

If the Church claims mar-

riage is an "honourable estate instituted by God" then what does that state of affairs say about the God who instituted it? That He was the same jolly fellow who thought up slavery? It would be less offensive to free marriage of the burden of sacramental status and recognise it as an evolving institution that changes over time to meet the challenges and demands of the day.

If the Church were prepared to think of marriage in a more ordinary way it would be better equipped to engage in the re-evaluation of marriage necessary for it to flourish in the coming century.

FAITH & REASON

JO IND

Are Charles and Camilla now to endure marriage by media as did the blind-date couple in Birmingham – or is the eve of a new millennium the right moment to re-evaluate the institution?

Greg and Carla's wedding was tacky of course, but aren't many weddings a chance to display tack in all its grossness? I don't find a pair of wedding rings inscribed BRMB 98.4FM much more distasteful than videotaped vows, soft-focus photography and bridesmaids dressed up like blobs of blancmange. And just because it was a media event for BRMB it doesn't mean it was a publicity stunt for Greg and Carla. It's possible they were only in it for their 15 minutes of fame, but we don't know that. They might have been taking their vows as seriously as people who marry "because they love each other". Time will tell.

The remarkable aspect of the blind-date wedding was the conversations it sparked off in pubs and wine bars throughout Birmingham. BRMB had organised what it called "objective" means to find the most compatible couple – questionnaires, interviews, a group dynamics session, psychometric tests, lie detector tests, interviews with friends and family and horoscope analysis by Russell Grant.

All this got Caucasian Brummies thinking the unthinkable, namely that romance might not be the best basis for marriage after all. Perhaps, you could overhear them saying, there was more to the Asian culture of arranged marriages than they had previously assumed. When Central News conducted a phone-in poll, 54 per cent of its 8,000 callers said Greg and Carla had done the right thing.

The blind-date wedding was not making a mockery of marriage. It was making a mockery of romance. It was challenging the idea that chemistry and the giddy feeling that "you can't live without someone" are what marriage is about. It was saying ya-boo to the myth begun by the troubadours at the start of the millennium – namely that the overwhelming, all-encompassing emotion we call being "in" love is "true" love.

Today it's very useful for Westerners to separate marriage from romance. Too many of us marry because we fall in love, have affairs because we fall in love with someone else and divorce because we don't love each other any more. Perhaps if Prince Charles had been able to explain to his bride and to the nation that his was a dynastic rather than romantic liaison their marriage might have stood a better chance. It was our insatiable desire for romance that got in the way.

As we reach the end of the romantic millennium we need to rethink marriage just as we needed to in centuries before. The Church could use its considerable resources to help to do that and make the new millennium one of pragmatism – and of commitment.

GAZETTE

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

TODAY: The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am. TOMORROW: The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 10am; F Company Scots Guards mounts the Queen's Guard, at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, band provided by the Scots Guards.

Announcements for BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorials, Services, Weddings, Anniversaries, In memoriam) are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra).

BIRTHDAYS

TODAY: Sir Herbert Ashworth, former chairman, Nationwide Building Society, 89; Mr Jack Bowman, former Chief Constable, Tayside, 68; Sir Frederick Catherwood, former MER 74; Sir John Clerk of Penicuik Bt, former Lord-Lieutenant of Midlothian, 82; Mr Phil Collins, musician, actor and singer, 48; Miss Christina Foyle, bookseller, 88; Sir Robert Gatehouse, former High Court judge, 75; Mr Gene Hackman, actor, 67; Mr Lynn Harrell, former Principal, Royal College of Music, 55; Miss Amanda Harris, actress, 36; Mr

Patrick Heron, painter, 79; Professor Christopher Howes, Second Commissioner and chief executive of the Crown Estate, 57; The Earl of Buntingford, racing trainer, 51; Mr Islam Karimov, president of Uzbekistan, 60; Lord Mackay of Drumadoon QC, 53; Sir Charles Mantell, High Court judge, 62; Professor Stan Mason, former Vice-Chancellor, Glasgow Caledonian University, 65; Mr Mitch Murray, song composer and producer, 59; Mr Hal Prince, theatrical director and producer, 71; Miss Victoria Principat, actress, 49; Mr John Proffm, President, Toybee Hall, 84; Miss Vanessa Redgrave,

actress, 62; Mr Derek Rick-ett, show jumper, 49; Sir Colin Rimer, High Court judge, 55; Mr Boris Spassky, chess champion, 61; Mr Martin Taylor, former vice-chairman, Hanson plc, 64. TOMORROW: Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands, 61; Mr Peter Allen, radio presenter, 53; Professor Sir Eric Ash, former Rector, Imperial College of Science, 71; Sir Michael Astill, High Court judge, 61; Miss Pres-ley Baxendale QC, 48; Mr George Benjamin, composer, 39; Miss Carol Channing, actress and singer, 78; Mr Christopher Chataway, former chairman, Civil Aviation Authority, 68; Mr Robert

Clatworthy, sculptor, 71; Mr William Creable, artist, 63; Lord Nicholas Gordon Lennox, former ambassador to Spain, 68; Dame Brenda Hale, High Court judge, 54; Sir John Hobhouse, a Lord Justice of Appeal, 67; Air Marshal Sir Richard Kemball, 60; Mr Norman Mailer, novelist, 76; Mr Phil Manzanares, guitarist, 48; Mr Patrick Morgan, counsellor and deputy head of post, Abu Dhabi, 55; Miss Rosanne Masgrave, Headmistress, Blackheath High School, 47; Miss Suzanne Pleschette, actress, 62; Miss Jean Simons, actress, 70; Sir Michael Wilford, former ambassador to Japan, 77.

Fascism – the feelgood factor

Roberto Benigni is Italy's favourite funny film guy. And he thinks there's humour to be found in concentration camps. By Geoffrey Macnab

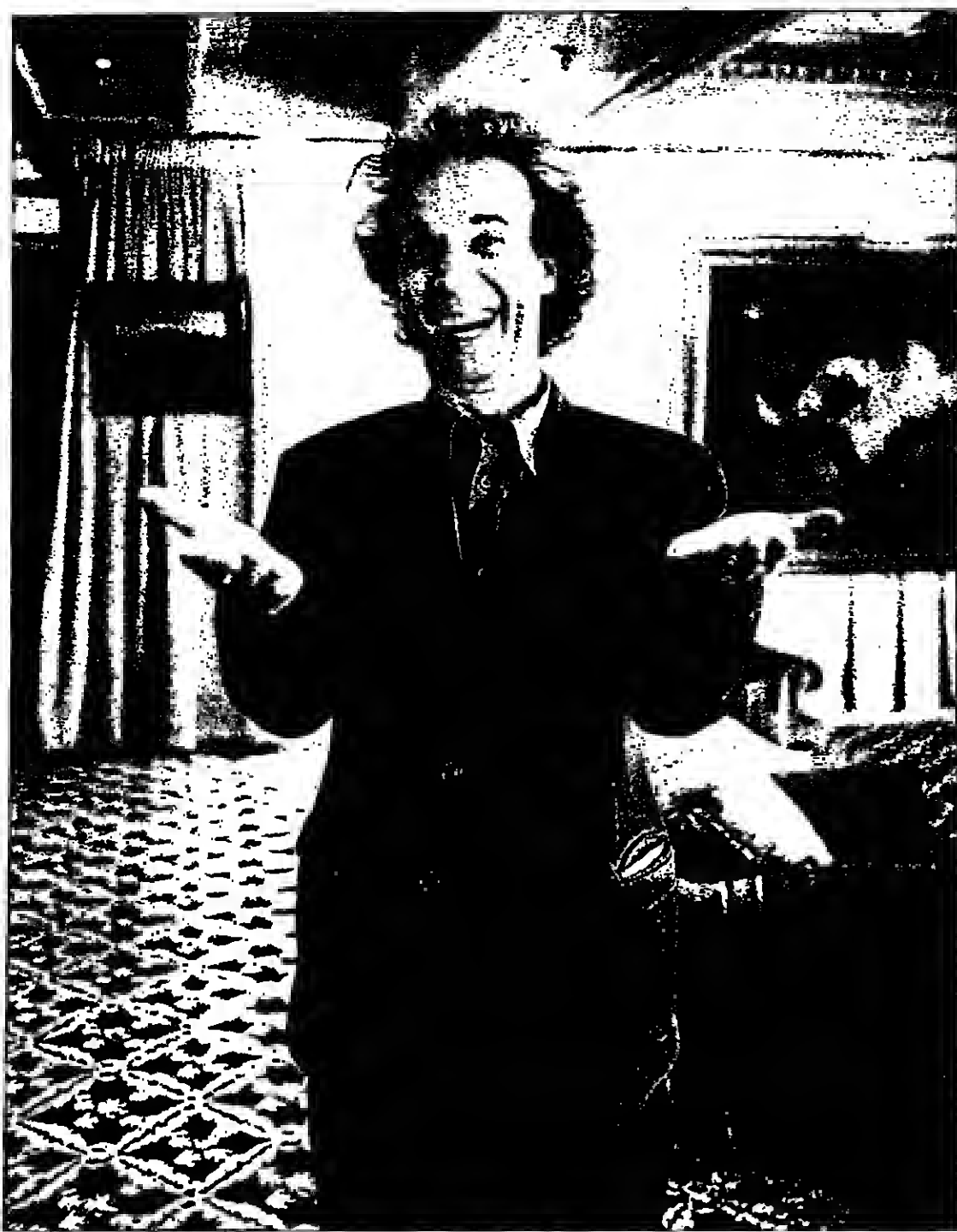
Roberto Benigni dispenses kisses in liberal fashion. The effervescent writer-director-comedian, a household name in his native Italy, stands perched on the edge of international stardom thanks to his new movie, *Life is Beautiful*. He is so excited by the prospect that he is ready to plant his lips on anything that catches his eye. He was even recently caught embracing his ferocious American distributor, Harvey Weinstein. "I love to kiss women and men," he explains. "And animals. Also vegetables... and I kiss trees too!"

You may have spotted Benigni behind the wheel in Jim Jarmusch's *Night on Earth* (he played a motor-mouthed Roman taxi driver with an unholly passion for sheep) or as the eccentric convict in Jarmusch's *Down By Law*. You may have seen his Peter Sellers pastiche as a young Clouseau in *The Son of the Pink Panther*. In *Life is Beautiful*, his trademark exuberance is only slightly dampened by the grim nature of the story. He stars as a Jewish-Italian waiter thrown into a Nazi death camp along with his young son Giosue (the Jackie Coogan-like newcomer, Giorgio Cantarini).

Benigni has worked with children before. Back in 1979, he appeared alongside a small army of four-year-olds in Marco Ferreri's *Chiedo Asilo*, an anarchic film about a kindergarten teacher and his unruly charges. Ferreri, the director of *La Grande Bouffe*, is best known for his obsession with food and sex. Benigni remembers: "Before each take, he'd mumble a few instructions. He'd say to me, 'Roberto, explain to them in their own language that the world is a horrifying thing, that we're all here to suffer. Tell them also that it can be wonderful too.'" Benigni would oblige. Then Ferreri would yell ACTION! and the 50 or so kids would run amok.

Although *Life is Beautiful* was made in a very different style ("I completely prepared everything – there was nothing down to improvisation"), Benigni acknowledges Ferreri's influence. It was through Ferreri that he met Primo Levi. "His books changed my life," Benigni says of the great Italian writer and concentration camp survivor. "I was not the same after I had read them."

Whereas Levi chronicled his experience of Auschwitz in *If This Is A Man* in solemn, heart-rending detail, Benigni's movie opts for Chaplin-style slapstick and verbal gags. Guido, the quick-witted Jewish waiter, is forever posing trick questions to his favourite customer, Dr Lessing. "I like riddles," says Benigni, reminiscing about how he and Umberto Eco used to send each other jokes and word games through the post. The rub comes later on when the doctor tells him a story about a duckling. By then, Guido and his young son are inmates in the Nazi concentration camp. Lessing



Roberto Benigni, director of 'Life is Beautiful'; top right: 'The Son of the Pink Panther'; below right: 'Life is Beautiful'



William Laxton/Outline

is the camp doctor. "It's a very dramatic moment. He is asking Guido to solve an enigma about a duckling, but the enigma is really about his life, which is in danger." It comes as a bolt from the blue to see Lessing, the humane, cultivated figure from the first half of the movie, transformed into a Nazi. "That happened in real life – normal people, doctors, professors, were forced to join the SS. They'd try to hide the reality, otherwise their brains would explode... to hide themselves behind some-

thing – in this case, [it was] the riddles." Benigni was inspired to write the character of Lessing in this way by Primo Levi's recollections about meeting a Nazi chemist. Levi, a chemist himself, had tried to engage the Nazi in conversation, "but the Nazi chemist was talking only formulae, like riddles".

Interviewing Benigni is a disconcerting experience. He pulls faces and puts on funny voices. He tries to make you laugh. Then, when you ask where the comedy is

in Nazi genocide, his features cloud over as if this is the most difficult puzzle of all. The answer lies at least partly in his own background. Benigni's father was a Catholic farmer, "a very simple man who didn't know anything about the war", who was sent off to serve as a soldier in the Italian army in Albania. After the Italian Armistice of September 1943, he was arrested by the Nazis and spent two years in a labour camp. "And when he came back, he was a skeleton. He weighed 35 kilos. He

was a crazy man, like a dead man. He was an obsessive."

Benigni wasn't himself born until 1952. Nevertheless, throughout his childhood, he and his sisters were told terrifying stories about life in the camp. Their father was traumatised by his memories, but humour was his therapy. "There were some funny things too. And when he was able to smile, he stopped having nightmares."

Life is Beautiful begins cheerily enough, like a latter-day Mack Sennett two-

reeler. The mood changes when Guido and his family are arrested by the Nazis but, even in the camp, the wisecracking continues. Guido tries to convince his son that they're on some sort of extended adventure holiday and that if he plays by the rules, he'll win a special prize of a tank. The sheer whimsy seems incongruous given the surroundings. Benigni, though, denies that making jokes about concentration camp inmates is in bad taste. "I'm not pulling someone's leg or mocking. When you think about St Francis, he laughed in front of someone who was dying, but he did so in a very light and wonderful way. He was trying to make the man happy before he died. This is another kind of humour."

Nor, Benigni insists, does *Life is Beautiful* trivialise its subject matter. He points to its reception in Israel, at the Jerusalem Festival (where it won four awards), as some sort of vindication. "I don't know if silence can have a quality, but the quality of the silence during that screening was unbearable for me," he says. "I remember there was one minute of silence at the end, which seems like an infinitely long time, and then they started applauding."

In Italy too, the film has been well received despite initial misgivings. "Audiences went to watch the movie with curiosity and concern, asking why I was touching on such a strong subject, but it has been my biggest success." There was one newspaper which dedicated an entire issue to criticising him. "I respect their point of view, but when they say the film is fascist, I don't know what they're talking about."

Benigni's friend Umberto Eco saw the movie twice. Although suspicious about the premise, he was soon carried away by the sheer brio of the storytelling. *Time* magazine's Richard Schickel was less enthusiastic. In a hostile review, he argued that "turning even a small corner of this century's central horror into feel-good popular entertainment is abhorrent. Sentimentality is a kind of fascism too, robbing us of judgement and moral acuity, and it needs to be resisted." Other critics have suggested that the film is well-meaning but hugely naive. Benigni counters them, claiming that nobody has a monopoly on the Holocaust. "It was a tragedy so inexpressible that it belongs to everybody... it belongs to me too." In the meantime, the film continues to pick up awards at festivals and to break box-office records, a sure sign, Benigni believes, of its universality of appeal.

Primo Levi committed suicide in 1987, still seemingly unable to exorcise the memory of the camps. What would he have made of *Life is Beautiful*? It's not a question which Benigni will even dare to answer. "But having read his interviews, his books and having met him, I don't think he would have been against it."

Life is Beautiful opens on 12 Feb

Happy Birthday Mozart, from Dittersdorf and Pergolesi

WITH MOZART'S music being played daily all over the world, a birthday concert sounds like a dull adventure. So why not give the opposition a chance? Or, more especially, those whose feeble light was dimmed by Mozart's genius?

Such logic partly inspired the Classical Opera Company's appearance at the Royal College of Music's Britten Theatre on the eve of the birthday, in an event that featured music by Dittersdorf and

Pergolesi, as well as by Mozart himself. In the same venue last summer, the ensemble gave their operatic debut with his early *Apollo and Hyacinthus*. Since then, the theatre's become something of a home to this young, aspiring orchestra. Their authentic timbre of gut strings and reedy woodwind sounds well in its dry yet not unkind acoustic. So too, on Tuesday, did the voice of the actor Greg Wise, noted as Willoughby in the film of *Sense*

and *Sensibility*, and here reading excerpts from the late Ted Hughes's *Tales from Ovid*.

The first half's theme also took a mythical turn, with a Dittersdorf symphony, *The Four Ages of Man*, preceding a Pergolesi cantata, *Orfeo*, before it came to a quietly resounding end with the soprano Mary Plazas's account of the Mozart concert aria, "Ah, lo previdi". Granted, the band could just as well have unearthed some Mozart-

CLASSICAL
CLASSICAL OPERA
COMPANY
ROYAL COLLEGE
OF MUSIC
LONDON

ian rarities. But the contrast of these other works both refreshed the ear and pointed a moral: banality touches every age, and our standard

view of the golden days of classical music may be as simplistic as the Ovidian ages of gold, silver, bronze and iron that Dittersdorf depicted. Iron proved of special interest: braying trumpets recalled high-energy Beethoven, but without a theme in sight. Pre-classical minimalism?

The cantata *Orfeo*, by contrast, was accomplished and cute. Plazas charting in firm melodic lines the tale of the songster from Thrace. Now almost forgotten save for his

"Miserere", Pergolesi, who died even younger than Mozart, yet much more famous, was suavely talented; but his ideas scarcely compared with those of "Ah, lo previdi", where, in the closing aria, a consoling oboe lulled the voice to an acceptance of grief above a plucked accompaniment that bore the imperishable Mozart hallmark.

Likewise the Jupiter Symphony, the single item in the second half. The conductor Ian Page's thought-

ful tempi made for a brisk yet never breathless first movement, and an andante relaxing at a speed that also gave point to the main theme's significant silences. Throughout, a semi-chorus of bubbling oboes and bassoons was a strata of in-built comedy. That miraculous finale moved in every sense, propelled by the skill of these players and the kind of invention that placed the birthday hero way ahead of any rivals.

NICHOLAS WILLIAMS

THE INDEPENDENT NIGHT DRIVING GLASSES - £9.99 per pair inc p&p



These glasses have been specially designed for driving. The superb gold graduated lenses dissipate visible glare and give clarity of vision. They give 100% ultra-violet protection and the lightweight frame allows for a maximum field of vision. Driving glasses are equally suitable for men and women and very importantly they conform to all three specifications of BS2724 which some other driving glasses do not.

If you are looking for relaxing, distortion free vision, these are for you and at just £9.99 including a FREE protective case they are super value-for-money!

HOW TO ORDER Fill in the coupon and send together with cheque or postal order. NO CASH please to -

THE INDEPENDENT NIGHT DRIVING GLASSES OFFER, PO Box 261, Slough SL2 3RU. For Access/VISA orders, please phone: 01753 642234

We deliver to addresses in the UK only. Please allow up to 28 days for delivery from receipt of order. Return within 7 days for refund if not completely satisfied. Offer subject to availability.

Please send me _____ Pairs of Driving Glasses @ £9.99 per pair inc p&p. I enclose a crossed cheque for £____ (address on back) made payable to: INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPERS (UK) LTD ENT212. Or debit my Access/VISA account by this amount. My card number is: _____

Signature _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

Post Code _____

Sent to: THE INDEPENDENT NIGHT DRIVING GLASSES OFFER, PO Box 261, Slough SL2 3RU.

Please tick this box if you do not wish to receive future offers from Independent Newspapers (UK) Ltd or companies associated with Independent Newspapers (UK) Ltd. () ()

* as published in the Independent on 29 January 1999. All rights reserved. © 1999 Independent Newspapers (UK) Ltd.

Root and branch upheaval

THEATRE

THE FOREST
LYTTELTON THEATRE
RNT, LONDON

WITH THAT long, equine face of hers, Frances de la Tour is wonderfully adept at suggesting how a fastidious horse might react in the vicinity of a particularly noisome drain. It's a talent that comes in mighty handy in Anthony Page's very funny – if a touch too leisurely – production of Alexander Ostrovsky's 1870 comedy *The Forest*. The piece is revived now in a robust and sparky adaptation by the Russian dramatist's 20th-century Anglo-Saxon counterpart, Alan Ayckbourn.

Toting around her cashbox as though it were an extra limb, Ms de la Tour plays Raisa, a tight-fisted fiftysomething widow and wealthy landowner. The action takes place just nine years after the emancipation of the serfs and Raisa's strategy for coping with this social cataclysm is to be even more tyrannical. De la Tour deliciously signals the skindrift selfishness under the widow's pose of misty-eyed philanthropy and the queasy distaste beneath her beamingly

gracious social permissiveness. All arch smouldering and ludicrous girlish flutter, Raisa has fallen in love with a young man half her age (David Bark-Jones), whose favour she sets out to buy.

This involves selling off strips of her forest to Vosmibratov (brawny, boorish Peter Gower), a serf turned rich wood merchant and the kind of man she would not have allowed into the house a decade earlier. It also entails effectively disinheriting her two dependants: Niamh Linehan's stropfully miserable Aklyusha, a live-in niece whom she treats as a tiresome charity case, and Gennadiy, a long-lost nephew. The arrival of the latter – itinerant ham tragedian with a diminutive comic sidekick in tow – turns the place and its values upside-down, causing the disruption you'd get if you let Don Quixote and Sancho Panza loose in a play by Chekhov.

The Forest gave rise to a landmark Expressionist staging by Meyerhold in 1924. Page's production limits itself to one symbolic touch: betokening the terminal decline of the country gentry, the woodwork in the outdoor scenes



Frances de la Tour and David Bark-Jones in 'The Forest'

appears to have been attacked by voracious termites. Elsewhere, the style is one of zestfully heightened naturalism. In

a performance that recalls the old northern comic, Sandy Powell, Michael Williams is a






delight as the little put-upon ragamuffin actor, hilariously excruciated when his partner's repeated grandiloquent gestures of generosity do them out of the wads of money he so desperately craves. But Michael Feast's Gennadiy lets you see that there is genuine kindness under the tragedian's high-flown romantic attitude. This is a rare play where thespians stand for sincerity and "real" people, epitomised by de la Tour's Raisa, for shabby falsity. There's a lovely sequence where Gennadiy hurls denunciations from *King Lear* at Vosmibratov, who has just pompously savoured swindling Raisa out of several thousand roubles. It's typical of the play's wit that these Lear-like posturings don't exactly shame the ex-serf but sting him into a sort of theatrical competitiveness. He proceeds to do "the honourable thing" in an equally histrionic way.

An attractive drama, and much more than just a dry run for Chekhov's *Cherry Orchard*. PAUL TAYLOR

A version of this review appeared in the later editions of yesterday's paper

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

BY FIONA STURGES

EXCELLENT	GOOD	OK	POOR	DEADLY
OVERVIEW	CRITICAL VIEW		OUR VIEW	ON VIEW
THE FILM SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE  Joseph Fiennes and Gwyneth Paltrow star in John Madden's costume drama, scripted by Tom Stoppard, in which the young Will Shakespeare suffers writer's block.	<p>"It almost defies you not to have fun," remarked Anthony Quinn. "The film's satirical playfulness will certainly give audiences a lift, though what will raise the roof is the more obvious dazzle of its two leads." "Sparkling with wit and wonderful performances," exclaimed the <i>Daily Mail</i>, while the <i>Evening Standard</i> confessed: "I</p>		<p><i>Shakespeare in Love</i> bears all the hallmarks of a winning costume drama and wears its frivolity on its sleeve. Backed by Stoppard's witty, intelligent script, this satire cannot fail to entertain.</p>	<p><i>Shakespeare in Love</i> is out on nationwide release, certificate 15. 123 minutes.</p>
THE DANCE PINA BAUSCH  After a 17-year absence from London, the German choreographer Pina Bausch brings her Tanztheater Wuppertal company to Sadler's Wells, to perform her 1986 work, <i>Viktor</i> .	<p>"Bausch's genius is for assembling the varied material, manipulating its contrasts of speed, mood or genre, and shaping it so that gradually you see the pattern beneath," revealed John Percival. "A wild grab-bag of incidents, ranging from the predictable and dull to the haunting and fiercely comic," opined the <i>Financial Times</i>, while <i>The Times</i></p>		<p>By turns solemn and comic, Pina Bausch's singular arrangements will at once disturb and delight, though devotees of traditional choreography might find "dance" thin on the ground.</p>	<p>Tonight's is the final performance of Pina Bausch's <i>Viktor</i> at Sadler's Wells Theatre. For enquiries call 0171-314 8800.</p>
THE EXHIBITION PORTRAITS BY INGRES  An exhibition of portraits by the French draughtsman Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres at the National Gallery, which includes the celebrated <i>Madame Mollin</i> seated.	<p>"There's a consciousness that a clothed body is a naked body touched all over. These are portraits in which at every point, intimacy occurs," noted Tom Lubbock, concluding: "absolutely enthralling." <i>The Spectator</i> declared it "a splendid and unmissable exhibition," while <i>The Times</i> found "a curious blend of antiquity and modernity." "Portraits don't get more pri-</p>		<p>As well as reflecting 19th-century bourgeois opulence, these astonishing images reveal Ingres as an insatiable lover of human flesh and repudiates the painter's reputation as a chilly idealist.</p>	<p><i>Portraits by Ingres - Images of an Epoch</i> is at the National Gallery, London WC2, until 25 April. For bookings and enquiries call 0171-747 2885</p>
THE PLAY VASSA  Sheila Hancock is the eponymous matriarch in Howard Davies' staging of the 1906 version of Gorky's play about a family torn apart by bourgeois values.	<p>"A savagely funny, if rather under-powered, production in which Hancock bags another monstrous matriarch," noted Paul Taylor. "Some amazing performances alongside the still, icy gravitas of Miss Hancock with her cackling last laugh," gushed the <i>Daily Mail</i>. <i>The Daily Telegraph</i> was delighted: "The Almeida has once again hit winning form,"</p>		<p>Davies' production of Gorky's play brims with unsettling dangers of work becoming an end in itself, and boasts strong performances from the entire cast.</p>	<p><i>Vasso</i> is at the Albery Theatre, London WC2 until 27 March. For bookings and enquiries, call 0171-369 1740</p>
THE BOOK A LIFE OF RUDYARD KIPLING  Biographer Harry Ricketts looks at the complex relationship between Rudyard Kipling's childhood, sexuality and professional life in <i>The Unforgiving Minute</i> .	<p>"Ricketts' straightforward biography provides a clear line through Kipling's morass of mental suffering... he is one of the great underrated figures in literature, and Ricketts' work will play its part in keeping him in the foreground," decided Frank McLynn. "Ricketts narrates readably enough... However, he short-changes the reader when it comes</p>		<p>Ricketts' straightforward biography provides a comprehensive and valuable account of Kipling's childhood traumas and quick rise to fame, but is short on literary analysis.</p>	<p><i>The Unforgiving Minute: A Life of Rudyard Kipling</i> by Harry Ricketts (Chatto & Windus) is currently available in bookshops</p>

EXIT POLL

THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES
THE KING'S HEAD
LONDON

TANYA CHARAF
30, unemployed, London
"She evaluates women very well. I think it's highly astute. And it was hilarious; it cracked me up. You could tell the audience really liked her, she is so natural and talks directly and openly. She confronts the reality of the experience women have."

MIKE McBRIDE
38, psychologist, London
"I enjoyed it very much. I liked the way it managed to be serious as well as funny. And I was very moved, especially by the monologue about a woman from a Bosnian rape camp. It was extraordinary in its diversity of subjects. In some sense she managed a very complex subject very cleverly, and I think that has a lot to do with the tone."

PAM PERRY
20, student, London
"It was great. I really enjoyed the way she told her stories through characters. It felt more real, especially as so many of the monologues were quite extraordinary. It is interesting to see how gender is treated in the theatre, and why this has been so successful."

MICHAEL EARLEY
40, publisher, London
"What was nice is it was graphic without being gross. In a proper context, the subject is enjoyable and refreshing. The women in the audience certainly seemed to love it. She is not a feminist by any means. She sets things up without making you feel uncomfortable, and she combines a good mix of storytelling rhythm and stand-up riffs."

What the camera didn't hear

THE ROOM is filled with the sound of a wave as it crashes on a seashore and then, seemingly, rolls itself back and crashes again, and again, and again. The room is filled with the sound of a wave as it crashes on a seashore and then, seemingly, rolls itself back and crashes again, and again, and again. The room is filled with the sound of a wave as it crashes on a seashore and then, seemingly, rolls itself back and crashes again, and again, and again.

VISUAL ARTS

WILLIAM FURLONG
IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM
LONDON

cocktail of disparate sounds conjures up a clash of associated images and leaves the head spinning. In "An Imagery of Absence", Furlong has chosen familiar sounds to both the Twenties and Thirties and now, as a means of linking the past with the present. "The sounds I recorded are those that surround us all the time in the way that ambient sounds do. They are the sort of sounds that would have been around then and pull the images into the present. It is all about what happened

next with these images and people." The photographs are clearly the work of an amateur photographer, at times out of focus or sporting a wayward finger over part of the lens, but the end results are atmospheric and an evocative historical record of the German youth movement in the inter-war years. The activities of the great outdoors are presented in a romantic light: this is an idyllic pastoral existence where everybody is at one with the land - a visual aesthetic which artists were later encouraged to reproduce under the Third Reich. Youth groups were numerous and popular in Germany between the wars, but all of them were eventually channelled into the Hitler Youth movement in 1939, when member-

ship of that group was made compulsory. And while the peace-time pictures shown here capture an innocent enjoyment of outdoor life, it is impossible for them not to call to mind future events. And so leaving the gallery, head still reeling from the barrage of discordant sounds and images, the Second World War British Spitfire and German Focke-Wulf suspended from the roof of the Imperial War Museum, appear more than a little apt. KATE MIKHAIL

William Furlong 'An Imagery of Absence', the Imperial War Museum, Lambeth Road, London SE1 (0171-416 5000), until 28 February. Entrance to the museum, £5 (adults)

From high heels to highbrow

HOW CAN you tell art from pornography? How indeed when you are at New York's Show World, the Times Square porn emporium, and you are watching *Breadman*, a short film about a man with a basket of actual bread. The film is part of Firewater Festival, a non-X-rated brief films selection that plays at Show World four nights a week. Last year, the city tried to zone sex establishments out of the centre of Manhattan but, due to a loophole, it shows like *Show World* as well as adult video emporia have stayed in business. As long as they maintain the required 60 per cent non-adult entertainment, the sleaze factories stay legal in Manhattan. It's easy to suspect the city's cown prudishness as stemming from the real-estate interests of Disney and

NEW YORK DIARY



ALISSA QUART

also starting a "Big Apple" dating service. This singular scene is of a piece with the story of how Firewater came to be. Dana Burnell, the 31-year-old screenwriter/festival co-

founder, ventured into the strip joints after the Supreme Court voted to uphold Mayor Giuliani's new anti-porn zoning laws. "I had worked on short films before, but they never got shown," says Burnell. "I saw an opportunity with this summer's ruling against the theatres." Of course, the festival's setting is its hook - its seedy atmosphere gives it a hipster credibility. Burnell says that one of the favoured activities before or after watching the Firewater films is to go into the stripers' changing rooms and have a chat on the legends on the wall. The favourite one reads, "Every dancer must wear high heels or boots". Not everyone gets the joke. A very highbrow TV channel that will go nameless interviewed us, asking us over and over again

whether people masturbate while watching the shorts," winces Burnell. Ivan Lerner, executive editor of *Screw*, a magazine which reads as its name suggests, says he feels a pang when he passes Times Square's sex accessories shops that were once filled with "whips and chains and dildos" and are now full of "ugly luggage and toasters". But Lerner sees the upside of the curious new arrangements of Manhattan's sex businesses. "I think the short films and the Kung Fu films they show now at PeepLand are quite wonderful," he says. "And I think it's good that Show World is playing the movies because New York's venues for revival films have all closed down. Porn and art have both been ghettoised by the Mickey Mouse moonolith."

ARTS DIARY

DAVID LISTER

SIR CAMERON Mackintosh has been obsessed with getting the musical *Martin Guerre* right for rather a long time. Now that the show has finally pleased the critics in its West Yorkshire Playhouse incarnation, the impresario can look to producing a new musical. Sir Cameron, at Wednesday's party for the transfer of *OklaHoma!* to the Lyceum, said he had finally found his next show. It will be a musical of John Updike's novel *The Witches of Eastwick*, with lyrics by John Dempsey and Dana P Rowe, who were responsible for *The Fitz* at the Donmar Warehouse. And it could open in London by the end of this year. Neither director nor cast has yet been chosen. Perhaps Sir Cameron should go for Sir Cliff Richard (right). He looked in need of cheering up at that same *OklaHoma!* party when a journalist asked him whether he had seen the musical when it first opened. Sir Cliff spluttered into his mineral water as he pointed out that *OklaHoma!* opened in 1943, when he was three years old.

WRITING ABOUT the Barbican Centre's rejected lottery application earlier this

week, I asked the Arts Council why it had been turned down. I was told: "It is our policy never to reveal our reasons for rejecting an application." Why not, for goodness' sake? Why should members of the public not be told why their local arts venue or a national arts venue is refused lottery money? For years ministers have been telling the Arts Council to be more accountable, with little effect. The Culture Secretary Chris Smith belongs to a party committed to open government. He could prove it by making this publicly funded quango take the public into its confidence.

MARCO GOLDSCHMIDT, the managing director of the Richard Rogers partnership, is one of the front-runners for the presidency of the Royal Institute of British Architects. In his manifesto he says he wants the country's planning laws changed so that architects are always consulted by local planning committees. It is a manifesto commitment he can make with some confidence. By lucky coincidence, Lord Rogers has been bending the ear of the Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott on exactly this matter, accompanying him on a trip to Holland recently to show him how the system works there.



IF YOU happened to be a Carthusian monk in 18th-century France, you were probably best advised to steer clear of the Abbé Jean Nollet. Otherwise you were likely to get involved in one of his experiments. Unfortunately for the monastic brethren, their Abbé had a scientific bent, and a particular interest in electricity. In 1746, he lined up 200 monks, joined them together with wire, and connected them to a crude battery. This human chain extended for almost a mile, yet the current coursed easily from one end to the other. As the monks jerked and convulsed, Nollet concluded that electric signals could be transmitted over long distances. So began this week's aerial on Radio 4. The Victorian Internet by Tom

Standage tells the story of the electric telegraph, and its eventual worldwide development by Samuel Morse and other pioneers. David Rintoul provided a nice tone of relaxed factuality for the reading so that the required technical explanations were not overbearing or tedious. Science seems always to have been one step ahead of the people who live with it, and 100 years ago the laws of physics must have seemed quite baffling. When the telegraph system was first laid out in America, few people understood how it worked. One farmer even decided that it must be a failure because he never heard any dispatches going up the line. Years later, after the invention of wireless radio, Mark Lamarr sat in a

THE WEEK IN RADIO



MAGNUS MILLS

studio with a big pile of records. Rock'n'roll is something else that resulted from noises being sent along wires, and if the genre is to survive its enforced leap from Radio 1 to Radio 2, then it needs someone like Lamarr to make sure it arrives safely. He opened his new series *Shake, Rattle and Roll* (Radio 2, Monday) by

announcing the one great truth: "Elvis is still dead." Lamarr takes over the ground so well-prepared during the past four weeks by Frank Skinner's *In the Days before Rock'n'Roll*. This week he delved deep and came up with several songs about Cadillacs, including a 1947 version of the Jackie Brenston classic, "Rocket 88". If you ain't got a Cadillac, you could always try a motor-scooter instead. This was the form of transport encountered by Henry VIII in *Corridors of Light and Shadow* (Radio 3, Sunday). Actually, he was looking for a horse, or maybe a mother, for his unborn son. He didn't seem to have made his mind up yet. Instead, he wandered around an Italian Renaissance city disguised as a musician and plagued by this bloke on a Vespa.

All very mysterious. If the young king really did once make a furtive visit to Mantua, as this programme suggested, then he was surely tempted by the late Duke's widow, Isabella d'Este. Set against a background of very modern noises, the regal pair went sightseeing together, and she seemed to drop a few hints. She pointed out frescoes where English royal livery lay entwined with Gonzagan marigolds. "Apollo wears a short skirt and leans forward," she observed. "He wears nothing underneath." This undoubtedly made Henry go all hot and sweaty, and when she led him into her secret garden he probably thought his luck was in. Trouble was, he was already married and she was having none of it.

SALE NOW ON

UP TO 50% OFF SHOWROOM MODELS

50 DESIGNS AND 20,000 FABRICS

With sofas and chairs hand-made to your exact specifications at no extra cost, and fantastic cut price offers, why not visit one of our showrooms now, you'll soon find yourself sitting pretty.

Call our 24 hour brochure hot line: 01992 637 820

Cheshunt: Delamare Road, Cheshunt, Herts EN8 9TF Exit 25, M25. Phone: 01992 626 686

Stevenage: 21 High Street, Old Town, Stevenage, Herts SG1 3BG. Phone: 01438 722 412

Opening hours: Mon - Sat 10am - 5.30pm (Sun 10am - 3.00pm Cheshunt only)

THE BOOKS INTERVIEW

Journeys across the border

Julia Blackburn takes literature to a land where fact and fancy mix. Sara Wheeler tracks her down

Is it a novel? Is it a travel book? Is it a biography? You're never quite sure with a book by Julia Blackburn. This seems, to the author, to be a perfectly natural state of affairs. "My whole life blurs the boundaries between fact and fiction," she says. "Categories are irrelevant."

Blackburn's career took off in 1994 when she published *Daisy Bates in the Desert*, a rich stew of travel writing, memoir and biography swirling round the eponymous Daisy, a feisty Irish fantasist who knocked about in the Australian hush in the first half of the century. Daisy reaped a bountiful harvest of reviews, a quantity of foreign rights sales and a loyal following.

For the book before that, *The Emperor's Last Island*, Blackburn travelled to St Helena in search of Napoleon. Her interest was piqued, she claims, when she saw the great man's pickled testicles displayed in a museum in southern France. In the book, Napoleon's story unfolds like a sail as Blackburn's ship steams towards his island.

Given her refusal to be pinned down by fact or fiction, it's not surprising that she has set her new book in the medieval period. She was attracted to the way it fails to separate the real world from that of the imagination. Saints walk on and off the pages of *The Leper's Companions* (Jonathan Cape, £14.99) without anyone turning a hair, and miracles happen alongside acts of horrid brutality.

The book – Blackburn's second novel – follows a small band of medieval pilgrims from a Norfolk village to Jerusalem. The group are joined by a shadowy narrator who has dropped in from the modern era. Blackburn is much taken with this notion of the elasticity of time. "Everything kept reminding him of something else," she writes, "the elements deceptive and the past breaking through into the present while the present sank back into the past."

Writing is in the family: her father was a poet. Thomas Blackburn separated from Julia's painter mother when their only child was 12. As he drank a lot and took amphetamines, it was a wild kind of childhood. But Julia was clearly fond of her dad, who died in 1977. She recently edited a selection of his poems, *For a Child*, which the Warwick-based Greville Press is bringing out this month.

The title poem, written for Julia, begins "And have I put upon your shoulders then. What in myself I have refused to bear". And so it turned out to be. Thomas's daughter has been writing for as long as she can remember, cobbling a living together from freelance editing, ghostwriting and copywriting, initially in London and subsequently, after her children were born, in Suffolk. She says she didn't have the confidence to write fiction for many years, and that it never occurred to her that she would be able to earn a living from proper writing. But she does now. She turned 50 last year, and is published in ten languages.

Her Dutch husband and their two children went with her both to St Helena and Australia. The family home is a comfy old house in north Suffolk, a few miles from the sea and a few more from the Norfolk border. There is a large, rambling garden, and a boisterous lurcher called Mink. Blackburn blends in with the happy detritus of rural family life – hairy dog baskets, discarded wellies and seashells queuing on the windowsill – and when we go out for a walk she wears an old blue woolly hat. There is a



JULIA BLACKBURN, A BIOGRAPHY

Julia Blackburn was born in London in 1948. She took a degree in English from York University and worked as a freelance writer and editor before devoting herself full time to her books. She has two children, is

divorced and lives in Suffolk. Her six books include *Charles Waterton* (1989), *The Emperor's Last Island* (1991), *Daisy Bates in the Desert* (1994), and two novels: *The Book of Colour* (1995), which was shortlisted

for the Orange Prize, and *The Leper's Companions*. She has just edited a volume of her father Thomas Blackburn's poetry, entitled *For a Child* and published this month by The Greville Press.

touch of the Luddite about her. She still writes her books on a manual typewriter. Critics have compared Blackburn's work with that of Bruce Chatwin, who died ten years ago. It's difficult not to see parallels, both writers clothing skeletons of fact in the ample flesh of their imaginations. In style,

too, the pair are remarkably similar. Both favour sketchily drawn characters, short books, short chapters and short paragraphs, and both display an aversion to the subordinate clause.

Unlike Chatwin, however, who famously began his travel book in Patagonia with

the fiction "in my grandmother's dining room there was a glass-fronted cabinet and in the cabinet a piece of skin," Blackburn never makes anything up in her travel writing. She bridges at the suggestion, "There is nothing invented. It would never occur to me to make anything up."

But she does admire Chatwin. "I've got terribly excited reading his books. I have a sense of coming home. I get bogged down with some bits, like the Grand Guignol of *The Viceroy of Ouida*, but I like the freshness with which he approached each subject. He might be slightly dodgy in some of his fictions and fictions, but his integrity in actually writing is without question. It's an honour to be compared to him."

She has none of Chatwin's studied self-awareness, though, and it's simply not possible to imagine myth-makers getting to work on her. For a writer so powerfully drawn to fantasy, Julia Blackburn is reassuringly down to earth. A woman who has to do the school run, buy the dog food and wash the smalls can't be running off to Paris every five minutes to stock up on moleskin notebooks. "I see books very much as companions in the times I am writing them," she says, "so to me they represent stages of my life. They are all part of my autobiography, and I can read myself and things that I was going through in the books."

In the case of *The Leper's Companions*, she was going through a great deal. Her marriage had come apart. "The story became very literally a way of getting out of the present by going into the past and thinking about things I couldn't think about directly because they were too close to the surface – and too dangerous, I suppose. By seeing things through the metaphor of a medieval time, I could go through all sorts of adjusting processes."

Then, having completed a first draft, she became very ill. "When I was in hospital going under with the anaesthetic I suddenly thought, I know what's going to happen to the leper: I'd been holding on very tight in my own life, and when I was ill I had to let go. I saw, in hospital, what my connections were with the people I'd been writing about. That was when the book took its present form and I decided that the narrator should go along with the other characters on the pilgrimage."

She says she never knows where a book is going when she starts it. With *The Leper's Companions*, as the whole pattern of her life changed, so did the book. It was originally planned as short stories, then the biography of a medieval pilgrim – and it has turned out to be a typically Blackburnian hybrid. "It's quite funny," she says ruefully, "that one works flat out for three and half years and at the end of it you have just 216 pages."

Part of her, now, is living at the cusp of the 18th and 19th centuries. She's writing about Goya. During a visit to Madrid at a time when she was "unskinned", she saw his black paintings, learnt that he became stone deaf – and found her next book. Julia Blackburn's writing takes off when she leaves her notes behind and lets her imagination take over. "You get to the end of the research and say, right, now we're ready to begin. It's making the material your own that counts."

Making it your own: this is the key to Julia Blackburn's success. She does it instinctively: other writers have to discover it. Patrick Leigh Fermor once had the ultimate travel writer's disaster: he lost the notebook recording his journey. Yet the book which emerged, he said later, was one of his best.

She smiles when I relate this anecdote. "The pleasure of writing," she remarks sagely, "is knowing the material well enough to be able to go without maps."

COVER STORIES



WITH SIMPSONS – allegedly the inspiration for *Are You Being Served?* – having closed its doors, there's increasing speculation on the future of Piccadilly book-selling. One rumour has the venerable Hatchards quitting its site down the road to set up shop in the Simpsons building, the other has the Waterstone's name over the door with Hatchards moving to become a "Hatchards at Waterstone's". HMV Media Group, which owns both, is keeping mum. Intriguingly, the prestigious Hatchards site is owned by the Maudsley and Bethlehem Hospital. Could there be an apter metaphor for the madness of British bookselling?

BERYL BAINBRIDGE has yet another chance of making it to the altar *Master Georgie*, which many critics agreed should have won the Booker, is shortlisted for the £10,000 WH Smith Literary Award. This time she's up against Alan Bennett, Hilary Spurling, Anthony Beevor, William Boyd and Julian Barnes in another mixed-bag contest. Robert Harris, one of TV's talking heads for Booker night and a Bainbridge supporter, is chairman of the judges.

REMEMBER J R HARTLEY's long search for his book on fly fishing? Now authors, and indeed the rest of us, can dispense with the Yellow Pages and search on the net. The first online second-hand bookshop has just opened at: www.booklovers.co.uk. Booklovers offers good quality second-hand books in a wide variety of categories. Each title is described and quality-graded, making it possible to "browse" as one would in a real bookshop. Searches can be conducted by author, title or keyword.

FRANK HERBERT's 1965 novel *Dune* has become a SF classic, selling some 10m worldwide. Now his son Brian Herbert, along with Kevin J Anderson of X-Files fame, is finishing a three-volume "prelude" which will tell us what happened before *Dune* opens. The first will come from Hodder this autumn. The trilogy is based on notes left by Herbert, who died in 1976, and on conversations between father and son.

SUBTLE is not among the words ever applied to PR stunts. On 4 February, customers at Virgin Megastores who buy a copy of Josie Lloyd and Emyln Rees's collaborative novel *Come Together* will get a free condom. Meanwhile, its publishers Arrow have just sent journalists a packet of three. Thanks, guys, but it's the unprotected hype we worry about.

THE LITERATOR

The end of Lonely Street

Sky-high on prescribed drugs, he wore a Bureau of Narcotics badge with pride... Charles Shaar Murray asks where it all went wrong for the King

THE BEST one-sentence summary of the bizarre trajectory of Elvis Presley's life and career is still Little Richard's. Elvis, opined the Bronze Liberator, "got what he wanted, but he lost what he had". In *Last Train To Memphis*, the justly-lauded first volume of this monumental biography, Peter Guralnick told the story of how Elvis got what he wanted. In *Careless Love*, we watch Presley losing what he had. As his sly, manipulative manager Colonel Tom Parker once remarked, "When I met Elvis he had a million dollars worth of talent. Now he has a million dollars."

Careless Love picks up in 1958, with the 23-year-old Elvis's induction into the US Army and the death of his beloved mother, Gladys. These were pivotal events: the man was never the same after the bereavement and the artist was never the same after military service. He went in a threat to Western civilisation and came out a middle-American icon: a clean-cut family entertainer specialising in "Bing Crosby pictures".

An exhilarating late-Sixties return to form turned out to be little more than a mirage, and he spent the Seventies degenerating into the bloated, incontinent "Fat Elvis" who died in his bathroom, face down in



Careless Love: the unmaking of Elvis Presley by Peter Guralnick
Little, Brown, £19.99, 756pp

a pool of vomit with his gold-gyma bottoms around his swollen ankles. He had 14 different drugs in his system.

Elvis's position on the subject of drugs bears an eerie similarity to Bill Clinton's on sex. Elvis believed that having something legally prescribed by a tame doctor classified it as "medicine", as opposed to "drugs", which were for hippies and subversives. The logical conclusion was the grotesque spectacle of Elvis, weighted down with guns and higher than a Branson balloon on the kind of expensive heavy-duty chemicals about which street dopers could only fantasise, bootsheeting his way into

Nixon's Oval Office to offer his services as an anti-drug campaigner and blag himself a Bureau of Narcotics badge.

How did it all go so hideously wrong? As his buddy Lamar Fike remarked, "Elvis always kept his own world with him; he kept his bubble." One of his last girlfriends concurs: "Like the boy in the bubble – he was just this guy who had this wonderful charisma and things got blown away out of shape. He was just this innocent little guy."

If anything destroyed Elvis, it was precisely that. He was the first person from his background – redneck, blue-collar, white skin – to experience anything remotely like what happened to him. To maintain his equilibrium he surrounded himself with the posse of obsequious hometown buddies who became known as the Memphis Mafia and who combined with Colonel Parker to isolate him from the outside world. Spiritually deep but intellectually shallow, he had everything money could buy – but that was all he had.

So which Elvis are we talking about? There was the Elvis who endorsed Adlai Stevenson against Eisenhower in the 1956 election; who was – by the standards of his environment – quite spectacularly unprejudiced; who was pals with James

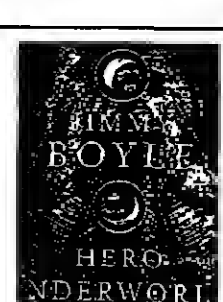
Brown, who tried acid in 1965; who became utterly distraught at the assassination of Dr Martin Luther King, and numbered *To Kill A Mockingbird* and *Dr Strangelove* among his favourite movies. Then there was the Elvis who considered J Edgar Hoover the greatest living American; who loved to wear cop uniforms and collect badges; who wanted to invite Khrushchev home to prove that anyone could succeed under capitalism; and who was so hung up about motherhood that he banished his bride from his bed following the birth of their child because he could not bear to have sex with any woman who had given birth.

To put it mildly, this is not a pretty story. Most of the best previous writing about Elvis has been analytical and polemical – much of that, in turn, has been the work of Greil Marcus, notably in *Mystery Train* and *Dead Elvis*. Here Guralnick plays it straight. In the preface to *Last Train To Memphis*, he stated that "if I have succeeded in my aim, I have given the reader the tools to create his or her own portrait of Elvis Presley." He has indeed succeeded – brilliantly and beautifully. What we are left with, ultimately, is a mesmerising account of America's broken promise writ large.

MEDIA COVERAGE for Jimmy Boyle's first venture into fiction has inevitably concentrated on his notorious past – Gorbals gang leader, convicted killer, "most dangerous prisoner", renowned sculptor and writer – rather than the quality of his work. Boyle's two-part autobiography drew attention to the brutality of Britain's jails in the 1970s and had a significant impact on the campaign for prison reform. So, as far as the British press is concerned, even 15 years after his release, the man may be out of Peterhead but Peterhead remains in the man.

Yet there are parallels between this novel and Boyle's own history that make speculation about its autobiographical content more than lazy journalism. Hero – John Alexander Ferguson, a long-term inmate of the brutal Institution – narrates a story which ranges from cruelty and incontinence to cattle-rustling and an audacious heist.

The Institution is a place where two warders, Gorky and Fat Head, goad and rape their charges while Dr Snider, lauded as a pioneering neurosurgeon, forces inmates to sing during lobotomies carried out under local anaesthetic. Like Boyle, Hero's refusal to yield to the regime lands him in trou-



Hero of the Underworld by Jimmy Boyle
Serpent's Tail, £8.99, 216pp

ble and he spends long years in solitary confinement, where his belligerent spirit refuses to be cowed. Once free, Hero's underworld is populated by a rag-bag of psychotic gangsters, corrupt police, kind-hearted prostitutes and weird former inmates seared by experiences inside. All of these echo the Gorbals gangland described by Boyle in his autobiography.

But it would be a pity if such parallels eclipsed the fact that this is an absorbing, if flawed, first novel, by turns shocking, passionate, uplifting and very funny. It is not another spin on Boyle's own dark secrets, though they have undoubtedly informed his writing (it is hard

to believe his own stretch in solitary was not in mind when the vivid passages about Hero's incarceration were written).

The strengths of the book are its compassion and gallows humour. In Hero, Boyle has created a character whose struggle captures the sympathy of the reader and whose narration has a linguistic authenticity – including an at times irritating tendency to slip into cliché. There is genuine pathos in the contrast between Hero's macho defiance during captivity and his utter impotence when released: he cannot control his bowels, let alone his penis. Freedom disempowers him and he longs for the status and security of confinement.

Much of the humour is provided by macabre comic set-pieces, though Boyle's reliance on bodily functions, cadavers and graveyards leaves him open to the criticism that he has opted for easy laughs. Hero's friends provide the other element of farce. The midge Bonocrusher, who eats pigs' eyeballs as though they were cod livers, is straight from the set of *Ballykissangel*, and the tramps Skelly and Warthog are types frequently found in this kind of Grand Guignol world. But the stereotypes are redeemed by clever character

twists and Boyle's sympathy. The novel's chief weakness lies in Boyle's method of writing. It reflects his approach to sculpting, which he describes as "energy". He chooses to attack his medium "blind", chipping away until the character of the stone emerges. This gives his sculptures a visceral power, a dangerous edge.

His approach to writing follows much the same style. The characters emerge from his unconscious, after which he chips away at his word processor until the story arrives. It is an unusual method in an age when plotting has reassured its primacy and many new novels resemble joined-up screenplays. When it works, it works well, but at times it leads to some sloppy writing in need of the editor's pencil.

Beyond these minor flaws, Hero... provides a vivid fable, replete with redemptive morality and a few belly laughs. As well as a notorious past, Jimmy Boyle can boast an undoubted ability as a storyteller of imagination and power.

NEW AUTHORS
PUBLISH YOUR WORK
ALL SUBJECTS CONSIDERED
Poetry, Non-Fiction, Biography, Religion,
Fiction, Children's
AUTHORS WORLDWIDE INVITED
WRITE OR SEND YOUR MANUSCRIPT TO
MINERVA PRESS
2 OLD BROMFORD RD LONDON SW7 3DD

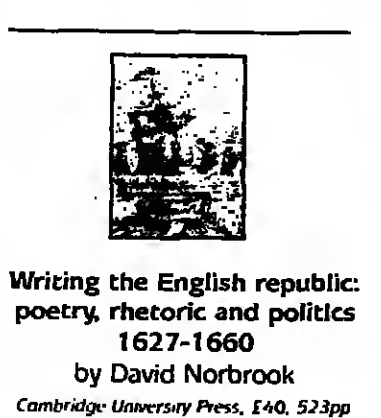
Prophets of a lost paradise

350 years ago today, the English beheaded their anointed king. Tom Paulin uncovers and celebrates the forgotten Republicans

Today's date is given in the Oxford University Dictionary as the feast of "Charles I, King and Martyr". Until last month, the distinguished scholar and critic David Norbrook was an English tutor at the university but, perhaps exasperated by all those smug dinners with toasts to the Queen, he resigned and emigrated to the republic of the United States. His marvellously original, densely researched study of the English republican imagination (and intellect, one should stress) is an attempt to retrieve forgotten figures like the regicide Henry Marten, as well as to extend our understanding of the work of Milton and Marvell.

As Britain moves towards either a republic or a reduced monarchy, *Writing the English Republic* should help us to understand both the tragedy and the glory of this partly-buried period of English literary history. What Milton called "the ostentatious parade of royalty" may even become a thing of the past. No longer a literary theme park, Britain will be a vigorous new republic which no longer needs (Milton again) "that fluted cry of the royal blood". But in order to do this a long period of historical amnesia will need to be addressed, and the shades of many ancestors brought back towards what Milton terms the "great palace now of light".

This burying of the past was in its time a civilised process which aimed to heal the wounds left by the two civil wars the English fought in the 1640s. However, as Norbrook points out, Charles's minions – like the previously loyal Cromwellian Sir George Downing, for whom the street is named – hunted down several regicides who were brutally executed. They were half-hanged, their genitals cut off and their intestines burnt in front of them. Beyond this barbarity, the Act of Indemnity and Oblivion banned "any name or names, or other words of reproach tending to revive the memory of the late differences". Norbrook's study attempts to counter the effects of this erasure. Suppressing the republican element in English culture means that most British citizens have an impoverished idea of their national past.



Writing the English republic: poetry, rhetoric and politics 1627-1660 by David Norbrook
Cambridge University Press, £40, 523pp

To begin the process of educating us as citizens, scholars like Norbrook need to spend years in libraries like the Bodleian (that library bravely hid Milton's books after the Restoration, rather than obey an order to burn them). One of his major discoveries concerns the Roman poet Lucan, whose epic poem *Pharsalia*, about the civil war between Caesar and Pompey, is central to the English republican imagination. Virgil and Horace remain strong presences in English poetry, but Lucan's austere republicanism has been lost. Christopher Marlowe's resonant translation of the first book of the *Pharsalia* was published after his murder, and my hunch is that Milton remembered part of it ("rings of fire" fly in the air, and dreadful bearded stars.) And comes that presage the fall of kingdoms when he dictated these lines about Satan's obscure glory:

as when the sun new risen
Looks through the horizontal misty air
Shorn of his beams, or from behind the moon
In dim eclipse disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs

Charles II's Licenser of the Press regarded these lines as politically subversive. If he had spotted the parallels between Milton's Satan and Lucan's Caesar, he might also have seen that *Paradise Lost* celebrates the English republic right from the opening address to the Holy Spirit. Among Norbrook's discoveries is a pamphlet in which a republican theorist echoes the

opening of *Genesis* ("the earth was without form and void") to describe the historical situation out of which the English commonwealth was created. God's creation of the universe is analogous both to the emergence of republican England, and the divine inspiration which builds *Paradise*.

Norbrook is particularly interesting on the way in which political theory derived from Lucan and Machiavelli informs writing during this period. He shows how discord and turbulence were seen as central to the health of a state. Where Virgil and Horace liked to sing of concord, Lucan describes both the Roman state and the cosmos as an unstable, discordant mechanism. Where royalists believed in beauty, concord, unity, puritan republicans believed in sublimity, free speech and a turbulent iconoclasm.

This battle, both political and aesthetic, informs a sermon by William Laud which is another of Norbrook's compelling discoveries. Laud, who became Archbishop of Canterbury and died on the scaffold like his master Charles I, was at this time Bishop of London. On 17 March 1638, he gave a sermon at the opening of parliament which alludes to Caesar's overthrow of Pompey and the Emperor Frederick's triumph over Saladin. By analogy, Caesar and the last important medieval Holy Roman Emperor are Charles I, while Pompey and Saladin are those puritan members of parliament who 17 years later would convict Laud of treason and cut off his head. As Norbrook states, Laud's sermon "publicly and provocatively aligned the Anglican church with the goal of crushing republican liberty."

One of the triumphs of Norbrook's historical method of reading literary texts is the close attention he pays to particular words and lines of verse. Thus Marvell, at the start of the "Horatian Ode on Cromwell's Return from Ireland", uses the word "now" three times:

The forward youth that would appear
Must now forsake the muses dear
And now the Irish are ashamed
The Pict no shelter now shall find

As Norbrook shows, this use of "now" is linked to Sir Peter Lely's portrait of Henry Marten, that forgotten regicide,



Charles I bids farewell to his children just before his execution

Hulton Getty

which has the word NOW inscribed on it. The word is a Machiavellian injunction to decisive action, "to seize the occasion, perhaps linked with regicide". Although Marvell compares Charles I to Caesar in the "Horatian Ode", he famously ends the poem by warning that the same – i.e. military – arts that "did gain" a power, must it maintain? Cromwell, he implies, may yet become Caesar himself.

Milton, it may be, shared a similar reservation. He both eulogises Cromwell in his hugely eloquent and heroic pamphlet "Second Defence of the People of England", and warns him not to "invade that liberty which you have defended". Arguing that Cromwell ought not to assume the title of king, Milton – in a passage Norbrook quotes – activates the style of antiquity sublime: "You deservedly reject that pomp of title which attracts the gaze and admiration of the multitude. For what is a title but a certain definite mode of dignity; but actions such as yours surpass, not only the bounds of our admiration, but our titles; and, like the points of pyramids, which are lost in the clouds, they soar above the possibilities of titular commendation."

In my view, this is a passage which also allows us to see deep into Milton's political subconscious by tracing that curious, almost Magritte-like comparison of Cromwell's epic actions to pyramids. Compare this passage with some lines from Book Five of *Paradise Lost*:

and Satan to his royal seat
High on a hill, far blowing, as a mount
Raised on a mount, with pyramids and towers
From diamond quarries heaven, and rocks of Gold

We can recognise that pyramids, like Egypt itself, have Satanic connotations for Milton. He coded his detestation of Charles I and Charles II under the symbolic figure of the blind Pharaoh, the slayer of the Israelites' first-born sons.

In another prose work, "The Reason of Church Government", Milton compares the rule of bishops to a "pyramid" that aspires and sharpens to ambition: "the most dividing, and schismatical form that geometricians know of". Like William Blake, Milton disliked triangles, and by identifying them with Cromwell, he was bringing his anxieties about the direction of Cromwell's rule to the surface.

What emerges from Norbrook's plenary work is the need for a new edition of *Paradise Lost* which explains the many historical and literary allusions which are missing from modern versions. To read that supreme epic of English republican liberty is to be struck again and again by the fact that it is a patchwork of quotations from other texts, as well as a shimmer of glancing allusions to contemporary events.

Satan, for example, is compared to mist because the Royalists broke a treaty with Parliament during the Civil War and ambushed a parliamentary army under

cover of fog near Brentwood in Essex. Meanwhile, these anti-royalist lines: More solemn than the tedious pomp that trails

On princes, when their rich retinue long
Of horses led, and troops beset with gold
pick up statements by Lady Macbeth after King Duncan's murder. Milton is associating royal pomp and ceremony with a murderous would-be king, though I wonder if at a deeper subconscious level there may be some knot of regicide guilt here.

If a non-specialist can pick up such allusions, how many more can a Milton scholar find? Now that he has hatched *Writing the English Republic* out of the abyss of royalist Oxford, I suggest that an ambitious publisher invite Norbrook to do a new edition of *Paradise Lost*. One thing, sadly, is certain. That publisher will not be Oxford University Press, for that disastrously managed and discredited outfit – a department of the university – has axed its poetry list. Did the academics who are styled "delegates to the press" resign? No like Satan's minions, they cling to the cliff ledge of their bountiful free books. As we wait for that shining new edition of *Paradise Lost*, let us give thanks for those long years this exemplary Scottish scholar spent in the Bodleian Library, researching the deep structures of English liberty.

Tom Paulin is a fellow of Hertford College, Oxford

Duped by the mandolin's seductive sound

"THE MILLION-copy bestseller", yells the jacket on the latest reprint of *Captain Corelli's Mandolin* (Vintage, £5.99). A trifle previous, perhaps, since the latest figures showed the ubiquitous commuter's companion on sales of 995,000. At any rate, the Louis de Bernières blockbuster has helped to fuel some smug punditry about the upwardly-mobile drift of the book charts. More will follow in the wake of the late Laureate's Whitbread victory this week, as Ted Hughes has lately outsold the likes of Terry Pratchett and Maeve Binchy. (Then again, *Birthday Letters* owe its current form might well walk away with the Eurovision Song Contest, or even the Cheltenham Gold Cup.)

It's true enough that a handful of classy titles now profit from the

kind of marketing barrage that once served only pulp and glitz. Liberally sprinkled with the likes of *Cold Mountain*, *Memoirs of a Geisha* or *The God of Small Things*, the fiction Top Tens of the late 1990s do appear to have undergone a rapid evolutionary spurt. A decade or so ago, the equivalent lists would freeze in the lacky grip of Jackie (Collins), Jilly (Cooper), Freddy (Forsythe), and their friends. These days, such aristocrats of the airport racks will often undersell their "literary" rivals by a mile.

So far, so flattering – to readers, retailers and publishers alike. Yet it takes a trunk of cash to make a star – especially at the top end of the market. Even *Captain Corelli*, that fabled word-of-mouth success, enjoyed more PR attention than its

A WEEK IN BOOKS



BOYD TONKIN
Are we really 'braining up' to better books?

legend would suggest. The pizzazz that can catapult a complex novelist to peaks of fame will cost enough to ensure that other good writers languish in a deeper obscurity than

ever. In publishing, the differentials that divide the pampered elite from the rest have widened oceanically. Matthew 25:29 springs to mind: "Unto every one that hath shall be given..." So a host of gifted authors in the hard-pressed so-called "midlist" now find themselves out so much published as simply printed. There's no such thing as a free publication lunch, and the perceived second division will always pick up the tab.

At least plenty of novelists still find a home of sorts. Many species of non-fiction authors face out just neglect but extinction. Eliminate the journeyman biographies, the modish memoirs, the moonlighting scientists, the Cooked-up kiss-and-tells, and the non-fiction prospects for early 1999 look pitifully thin.

I have been savouring an exquisite set of essays and narratives by the American nature writer Barry Lopez. *About This Life* (Harvill, £12). This peerless stylist records reflective journeys across tundra or tropic that stand in relation to Bill Bryson's jolly trips roughly as Messiaen does to Madonna. A balanced culture needs both, of course – but dozens of chequebooks wave for the Brysons while only a few brave souls (in this case, Christopher MacLehose at Harvill) dare bid for the Lopezes.

Non-fiction writing of this grace and grandeur now looks as rare, and as threatened, as the wolves or bears Lopez so lyrically pursues. However sweet that chart-topping mandolin sounds, we need – more than ever – to hear different tunes.

Crying and lying on the road to truth

South Africa's 'rainbow nation' found not a crock of gold but a can of worms. Christopher Hope looks inside

THERE EXISTED in South Africa, from 1996 to 1998, a panel called the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. It became known as the TRC – because everything in South Africa is stripped down to bare initials. The Commission held public hearings across the country. Those who had suffered under the old regime were invited to tell their stories, and claim redress. And those responsible were encouraged to own up.

Antjie Krog followed the TRC as a radio reporter, and it gripped her body and soul. The TRC was a kind of stock-taking into the mountain of damaged goods the old regime left behind. The Commission was also one of the oddest bodies ever to lumber across the South African landscape. It was built of all the colours of what used to be called "the rainbow nation" – until people found the rainbow led not to a crock of gold but to a can of worms, and the expression fell into disuse.

It was led by a bishop, Desmond Tutu, and ran, it seems, on tears, rhetoric and adrenalin. When the Commissioners were not horrified by the evidence, they were horrified with each other. They regularly broke down and wept. Or called each other "racists". Or, worse still, "liberals" –

and, in the new South Africa, that's an even dirtier word than it was in the old South Africa.

Reading about the Commission in the Afrikaans press, I sometimes got the idea that it was seen as Lynch party led by a black bishop in a frock. Sceptical Afrikaners called it the "Crying and Lying Commission".

The TRC looked at the years between 1960 until 1993 – the age of High Apartheid. The period was arbitrary, but one must start somewhere. Start at the beginning and you would have to go back three centuries to the first Dutch settlers in the Cape, who bought a gang of slaves, plenty of whips, and retired to the shade of a thorn tree. The British took it over from there. And, finally, the Afrikaners turned it into the state religion.

Antjie Krog is an Afrikaner and this adds a fine edge to her telling. Her book is less about the victims of one of the cruelest and most stupid forms of blood-religion ever devised than about the anguish of many Afrikaners. Shame is what they feel, she says shrewdly, but not guilt. She is right, as any cursory reading of the white nationalist papers will show. Alas, very few people read the Afrikaans press. But she is mistaken when she says



Country of My Skull by Antjie Krog
Jonathan Cape, £16.99, 304pp

that the TRC made whites aware of what had been done in their name. Let us dispose of the canard that some people "didn't know". It was almost impossible not to know what was going on. You could not escape it if you wanted to. Apartheid was never a dirty little secret. It was for many people as natural as breathing.

The deal went something like this. Afrikaners ran the country. English-speakers went into business. Good South Africans were rewarded with rugby matches. Bad South Africans went to jail. Those who disagreed with the regime were exiled, jailed, banned, pushed from high windows, bombed,

shot and hanged. The people who ran the show were proud of it. And most whites not only knew how the show was run – they approved.

But the TRC at least provoked an assault on the collective loss of memory. Businessmen and judges, for example, now deny aiding and abetting the regime. Yet back in the old days it was as hard to find a captain of industry who did not support the regime as it is these days finding one who admits doing so. It is claimed that judges never supported the regime. But there was no need to: their judgments did it for them.

Appearing before the Commission were the foot-soldiers of apartheid: the torturers, interrogators, gunmen, informers, bombers and contract killers. But what of the big fish, those figures called in South African cliché-babble the "major players"? The white leaders who promoted the murder programmes; or the ANC commanders whose bombers into shopping malls? They regretted past "mistakes", dodged and weaved, or refused to testify. And blamed the "other" side.

Black and white politicians did what they do best. It is the old South African impulse – when in doubt, form a cartel and duff up the opposition.

Perhaps it does not matter. *Country of My Skull* is worth reading for the stories told by those who suffered most. Bereaved wives, fathers, lovers and children speak of their loss and their pain in voices so free of hatred that one can only marvel. Their evidence makes this one of the most remarkable books to come out of South Africa for a long time.

Antjie Krog did not cover the final few months of the Commission's life. Disillusion spread. Truth, as Pontius Pilate knew, is a dodgy little number to pin down – and reconciliation fared not much better. Poll after poll showed black and white further apart after the Commission wound down than before it started.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission began, in the eyes of some, as the government's creature. But faced with unpalatable truths about ANC atrocities, the government muttered darkly about shelving the final report. Tutu, as chairman, said he would go to jail first. It was just like old times. The TRC managed, in the end, to upset just about everyone – and that is a rather wonderful achievement.

Christopher Hope publishes his new novel, *Signs of the Heart*, in June

ERRATA by FELIX SENNETT



HOKROF STORY, ALSO KNOWN AS 'THE PREMATURE BURIAL'

'By far the most astute and painful dissection of male sexual restlessness that I have read'
Daily Mail

'Hanif Kureishi's best book so far'
The Times

Hanif Kureishi

The Londoner's Number one bestseller
Now in paperback £6.99
Also available as an audiobook

PAPERBACKS

BY EMMA HAGESTADT AND CHRISTOPHER HIRST

The Punic Wars

by Nigel Bagnall
Pimlico, £12.50,
347pp

A MODERN Field-Marshal applies his strategic expertise to the greatest confrontation of classical times. The 118-year conflict between Carthage and Rome was initiated by the expansionist Romans, who got more than they bargained for when Hannibal hacked his way almost to the walls of Rome. Bagnall's analysis is leavened with character sketches and dry humour. He notes that a ferocious general who advocated cannibalism to ease logistics problems was "obviously a very practical fellow, if a bit short on realism."

Karoo

by Steve Tesich
Vintage, £6.99,
406pp

IN THIS second novel Steve Tesich (who died in 1996 aged 53) has created an anti-hero as appealing as any dreamt up by Philip Roth or Saul Bellow. Dr Saul Karoo is a curmudgeonly script doctor with a drink problem, an ex-wife and an interior life to match literature's most hyped-up middle-aged males. Called upon by sleazy Hollywood studio executive Jay Cronwell to rewrite the first film of legendary director Arthur Houseman, Karoo ends up selling what's left of his soul for the sexual favours of a Venice Beach hopeful.

Arithmetic

by Todd McEwen
Vintage, £5.99,
185pp

CHILDHOOD, SOUTHERN Californian-style is the subject of Todd McEwen's latest comic novel. Thrown out of their hacienda-style bungalow to make way for the building of Disneyland, Joe Lake's family is relocated to a new tract home in a new town. School is OK until Joe blows it by taking a huge jade-coloured pencil (topped off with a wooden China man) to his maths class. From then on, arithmetic comes to embody all the "crappy feelings" he has for his new home. An energetic and brightly lit child's-eye view of life in the dirt hills of Orange County.

The Beast in the Nursery

by Adam Phillips
Faber, £7.99,
134pp

THIS BOOK consists of only three short essays, plus intro and coda, but you don't feel short-changed. Prompted by Freud ("the child's profundity is in the quality of his curiosity"), Phillips raises not so much on childhood as the losses experienced on the path to adulthood. Every line resonates with potent insights, often arousing feelings we have long forgotten: "The child is the virtuoso of desire... To forget the pleasures of anticipation is to forget memory itself." Indifference, says Phillips, is never an option for children. They are "suspicious of clarity... in awe of the passions".

The Gold of Exodus

by Howard Blum
Coronet, £7.99,
435pp

THOUGH IT reads like an airport novel, this is a real-life account of an attempt by a dodgy American duo - an "ex-SWAT team member" and a "politician and treasure hunter" - to find gold hidden on the "true Mount Sinai". While diving in the Red Sea, they chance upon "the land bridge that the Israelites crossed 4000 years ago". Sadly, the mountain of Moses turns out to be a Saudi nuclear base and our heroes are arrested. "Don't even think of turning cute on me", warns their captor. Were they set up by Mossad? Who cares? Reading this book is like being cornered by bar-room fantasists.

On the Move: feminism for a new generation

edited by Natasha Walter
Virago, £9.99,
186pp

IN HER book *The New Feminism*, *The Independent's* Natasha Walter challenged the assumption that feminism had become a dirty word among young women. This anthology of nine essays (including pieces by MP Oona King, journalists Kath Viner and Aminatta Forna, Helen Wilkinson of Demos, and several 15 to 18-year-olds) resoundingly proves her point. It's a passionately argued and undogmatic read, and Walter says she found herself disagreeing with many contributors' opinions. The only shame is that some of feminism's liveliest commentators were too long in the tooth to be included.

BESTSELLERS

Self-improvement is the order of the day at the top of the non-fiction list. The top seven titles tackle the inner and outer man and woman, as well as their surroundings. And it has been argued this week that a fair proportion of the phenomenal 150,000 copies

sold of Ted Hughes's multi-award-winning *Birthday Letters* has been purchased by aspirational readers, rather than by dyed-in-the-wool poetry lovers. Patricia Cornwell's avid fans have ensured that *Southern Cross*, her latest thriller, goes straight in at

number two, denied the top slot by Patricia Scanlan's tale of the lives and loves of three young women. Compiled from sales over seven days ending 25 January 1999
© Bookwatch Ltd, 1999

ORIGINAL FICTION

TITLE	AUTHOR/PUBLISHER	WEEKLY SALES	PRICE
1 (2) <i>City Girl</i>	Patricia Scanlan (Bantam)	2,839	£5.99
2 (-) <i>Southern Cross</i>	Patricia D Cornwell (Little, Brown)	2,171	£16.99
3 (1) <i>Tiffany's Secret Diary</i>	Kate Lock (BBC)	1,940	£5.99
4 (3) <i>Tom Clancy's Powerplays</i>	Tom Clancy (Penguin)	1,430	£9.99
5 (4) <i>Ramsey S: Under the Western Acacia</i>	Christian Jacq (Simon & Schuster)	1,175	£16
6 (10) <i>Glamorama</i>	Bret Easton Ellis (Picador)	989	£5.99
7 (5) <i>Churchill's People</i>	Mary Jane Staples (Corgi)	933	£16.99
8 (8) <i>This United States</i>	Colin Forbes (Macmillan)	882	£16.99
9 (6) <i>Archangel</i>	Robert Harris (Hutchinson)	841	£5.99
10 (-) <i>Miracle Cure</i>	Michael Palmer (Hutchinson)	760	

ORIGINAL NON-FICTION

TITLE	AUTHOR/PUBLISHER	WEEKLY SALES	PRICE
1 (3) <i>Men are from Mars...</i>	John Gray (Thorsons)	3,529	£8.99
2 (1) <i>Della's How to Cook</i>	Della Smith (BBC)	3,386	£16.99
3 (2) <i>Little Book of Feng Shui</i>	Lillian too (Element)	2,784	£1.99
4 (4) <i>The Little Book of Calm</i>	Paul Wilson (Penguin)	2,116	£1.99
5 (7) <i>Seafood Odyssey</i>	Rick Stein (BBC)	1,990	£18.99
6 (8) <i>Low Fat Cookbook</i>	Rosemary Conley (Century)	1,841	£16.99
7 (6) <i>Fighting Fat, Fighting Fit</i>	Janette Marshall (BBC)	1,584	£4.99
8 (9) <i>Birthday Letters</i>	Ted Hughes (Faber)	1,554	£14.99
9 (5) <i>Notes From a Big Country</i>	Bill Bryson (Doubleday)	1,499	£16.99
10 (-) <i>Station X: the codebreakers</i>	Michael Smith (Channel 4)	1,219	£14.99

SCIENCE

TITLE	AUTHOR/PUBLISHER	WEEKLY SALES	PRICE
1 <i>Longitude</i>	Dava Sobel (Fourth Estate)	1,661	£5.99
2 <i>Station X: the codebreakers</i>	Michael Smith (Channel 4)	1,219	£14.99
3 <i>The Mars Mystery</i>	G Hancock & R Bauval (Penguin)	687	£6.99
4 <i>Fermat's Last Theorem</i>	Simon Singh (Fourth Estate)	306	£5.99
5 <i>The Calendar</i>	David Ewing Duncan (Fourth Estate)	280	£12.99
6 <i>Earth Story</i>	Simon Lamb & David Singleton (BBC)	200	£19.99
7 <i>How the Mind Works</i>	Steven Pinker (Penguin)	190	£9.99
8 <i>Unweaving the Rainbow</i>	Richard Dawkins (Allen Lane)	176	£20
9 <i>Between Silk and Cyanide</i>	Leo Marks (HarperCollins)	103	£19.99
10 <i>Dragonfly</i>	Bryan Burrough (Fourth Estate)	101	£17.99

SPOKEN WORD
CHRISTINA HARDYMENT

Classic Crimes of Passion
read by Derek Jacobi
CSA, 3hrs, £8.99

THIS WEEK's audio choices feature passions past and present, perfect escapism listening for those banished to bed with the 'In. The Talkies Awards' Reader of the Year Derek Jacobi is probably best known at present for his portrayal of Brother Cadfael (available on audio from Hodder

Headline), but he comes magnificently into his own in reading CSA 'Telltapes' unusual selection of murderous tales with a passionate twist from authors as various as Louisa May Alcott, Algernon Blackwood, Guy de Maupassant and Wilkie Collins.



Come Together
read by Jack Davenport
and Natasha Little
Random House, 2hrs
£8.99

AUTHORS JOSIE Lloyd and Emlyn Rees hatched a neat idea along *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus* lines with this novel in which boy and girl alternate in telling the story of their meeting, each picking up where the other left off. Room for much almost unbearable but

horribly true to life misunderstandings, and a good deal of shrewd observation of current sexual mores (or rather amores). This "in your head" angle of approach works very well when read aloud, especially by such talented readers as Jack Davenport and Natasha "Becky Sharp" Little.

Dazzling horseplay around the pleasure-dome

Helen Stevenson revisits Lilliput with a female guide and enjoys a galloping satire on masculine follies ancient and modern



The Mistress of Lilliput
by Alison Fell
Doubleday, £12.99, 351pp

"SATIRE", WROTE Jonathan Swift, "is a sort of glass wherein beholders do generally discover everybody's face but their own." If a narrative is a glass, then what shall we say of Lemuel Gulliver's face? Age may not have withered him, nor even the fierce sun of the southern seas, but 300 years have lent a perspective to his features which no woman is inclined to find appealing. If we remember him now it is usually in an image from children's abridgements, pegged to Lilliputian earth, mightily fallen and ridiculous. Meanwhile, Mrs Mary Gulliver stayed at home and brought up the

children, patiently biding her time. "Like many of her sex my mistress was more interested in the mysterious continents of her own nature than in regions further flung". Now, at last, she has been given something to do. Alison Fell's narrator is Mrs Gulliver's doll, who owes equanimity to the fact that she is less susceptible to the sliding scale of self-regard and loathing than most women - being of an unvarying size. Nothing daunted by her husband's brief visit home, at a time when he was suffering from severe Hippomania and unable to abide his own species, Mrs Gulliver adopts a cheery attitude. She resolves to go

and find him. Accordingly, she sets sail with her little wooden doll, hoping to make up for lost conjugal time. A cloak of wide-eyed naivety is standard dress-code for the tourist. Travels and travels do not dim Mary's optimism. Her experience of the exotic does not so much whet her appetite for a voyage of personal discovery as lead her more fervently to wish for a time when she may be reunited with her errant spouse. In the meantime, she suffers her due ration of shipwrecks, sunstrokes and persecutions. Her most memorable experiences occur on Lilliput, where the little people decide to punish her by proxy for her husband's

offences against their country. The construction of a stately pleasure dome is decreed, in which Mary will be displayed to a curious public. "The emperor has endorsed the establishment of a Popular Pleasure Palace, with opportunities for sport and leisure, and arcades for market stalls and penny amusements, for he is persuaded that such an enterprise will not only swell the coffers of the country but also distract the populace, whose minds dwell with resentment upon their penalty." Most of the satire in this novel is directed at the familiar notion that women are keener on ecstasy than on enquiry. I enjoyed this brief instance

of plain contemporary pin-sticking. Gulliver is bound to be completely off his head by the time Mary catches up with him, but he was only ever a pretext. Given a choice between a humoursless Hippomania (he is still inclined to the odd snort) and a giggly Frenchman obsessed with breeding strawberry plants, you might think she would have done better staying at home and getting to know a nice merchant or vicar. But some women just don't know what's good for them. Words like sprightly, dazzling, brilliant spring to mind. Alison Fell wields glittering 18th-century pastiche prose like a deadly letter-

opener concealed in a lady's purse - itself concealed in a larger envelope, which is a literary form invented by men for men. The *Mistress of Lilliput* is an extraordinarily clever and impressive piece of writing, but it is not immune to the weaknesses of the genre - monotony, an atmosphere of relentless performance, the risk that the wind will change and the prose will stick like this till the final sentence. Men call this consistency. Alison Fell is a superb writer, but by the end of this novel, I felt her skills were dwarfing a genre she had outgrown in the course of writing. I look forward to more of the same, but different.

Charlie, coke, cream, snow -
the names change but the song remains the same...

COCAINE

phil strongman

AN INTOXICATING DEBUT NOVEL

Fantastically well-observed
and incredibly readable... Brilliant!

MIXMAS

ABACUS

INSPIRATIONS

WRITER AND PHOTOJOURNALIST
JOHN READER

The place
The sea. And any
coastline, where breakers
deliver the energy of the
oceans to the beaches, the
rocks and the tidal pools.



The play
Luigi Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author*. The best sort
of drama.

The film
The Passenger directed by
Michelangelo Antonioni.

The artwork
Any rock painting, where
you can stand exactly
where the painter stood
thousands of years before.

The music
"Early one morning, just
as the sun was rising..." -
that song, sung by a single,
unaccompanied soprano
voice, is an echo from the
childhood of an evacuee.
The simple, clear purity of
it doesn't so much fill a
space as create one.

John Reader's latest book
is *Africa: a biography of
the continent*, published
by Penguin at £14.99

ergo

Books worth
thinking about

see page 7 of
The Independent Magazine



Mud, mud, glorious mud: the Macintosh family in their garden, which they are planning to restore to its former glory

Martin Rickett

Water, water everywhere

GARDEN WORKSHOP: What is the best way to renovate a waterlogged garden in the Lake District? Anna Pavord offers a solution

Q WE MOVED recently from Cornwall to Cumbria and have inherited a garden of about half an acre which was last cared for 12 years ago. Neighbours have told us that this was once a lovely garden and we think that several of the remaining trees and bushes look interesting, if neglected. We have started to clear out the elder, hazel, sycamore, etc, that have seeded, and have begun to make a patch for a vegetable garden, but we have hit several problems. The area outside the side door (and main entrance) becomes soggy when it rains. The levels are erratic. Can we make it drier? If so, how? I know it has rained a lot recently, but even the path sinks under water.

A EMMA MACKINTOSH, her husband Ross and their three children (Alex, who is six, five-year-old Katherine, and John, three) live in a long, low, white-harled farmhouse near Hawishead in the Lake District. The house is beautifully situated, sheltered by rising land and well screened by trees, including ancient beeches. People must have been gardening round this house since at least the 1600s and, despite the

recent neglect, the Mackintoshes have taken on a place with some superb features. An old stone wall marks the southern boundary of the garden and immediately behind that is a wonderfully wild stream (sorry - beck, hung with ferns and mosses. Along this boundary, somebody who knew his plants has set fine rhododendrons, acers and azaleas, some of them now 12-15ft high. The path to the kitchen door is made from huge black flagstones, which continue round the south and west sides of the house. The site is flatish and the soil, though probably hungry, as many acid soils are, looked light and easy to work. Having taken on a house that was a ruin, and a garden that was completely impenetrable, I do not underestimate the slog that is needed to clear undergrowth and restore some sense of order and delight in a garden. Fortunately, Emma Mackintosh seemed more than equal to the task. Most importantly, she was keen to release the potential of the

garden. She felt (hooray!) that a garden un-gardened was a criminal waste of opportunity. And she had ideas and energy. At the moment, she is doing a textile design course, but had already dug an impressive vegetable plot and (with her husband) released many rhododendrons from choking bramble and elder. I felt like getting out my fork and joining her there and then. Ross Mackintosh trained as a land agent, so he will know better than I the best way to drain the land by the side door. Only time will tell how necessary this may be. Although the Lake District was severely flooded on the day of my visit, I got to the Mackintoshes' door dry-shod. But water is weird stuff, with a mind of its own. If it decides to be troublesome, a simple land drain exploiting the lie of the land towards the beck would keep it out of harm's way. The wide flagstone path at least prevents the area immediately around the house from churning into mud. The patch the Mackintoshes have chosen for their vegetable plot is

unlikely to suffer from the presence of apple trees at one end of it. The soil is light and stony, so will, anyway, need regular feeding. They are lucky in that they have access to as much farmyard manure as they want, and that a field gate leads from the lane directly into the lower part of the garden, close to the vegetable patch. A tractor could deliver a load of FYM without upsetting any other part of the garden. But will Emma Mackintosh be able to go on growing the squashes and other tender produce she enjoyed in her Cornish garden? I don't see why not. Although, geographically, they have made an enormous leap north, growing conditions may not be as different as she believes. For a start, their Cumbrian house is sheltered. And it is low, on a level with Esthwaite Water opposite. It is also much sunnier, she says, than their Cornish house, which was tucked away in a deep coombe. But she will need artificial help in extending the growing season. The Mackintoshes have acquired a greenhouse and this, together with

some rolls of Agralan fleece to protect crops from early frosts, should be all she needs. She can start the squash seedlings in 3in pots on her window ledge, harden them off in early June already well grown. Tomatoes will probably do better in the greenhouse than outside. The layout of the garden was not entirely satisfactory. Mrs Mackintosh had discovered two beds that seemed once to lie either side of a stone-edged path, but they were rather lost in the expanse of grass and did not relate to any other features in the garden. Nor did the strip of path between them link to any access from the house. She wanted somewhere to grow herbs and flowers, but I did not feel this was the right place. The beds would always look as though they had been dumped from on high by a passing auk. But the west side of the house joined on to a south-facing stone boundary wall, which made a wonderfully warm corner, butting onto some huge flagstones. Protected as it was on two sides,

and with the best aspect in the garden, this would be the most natural place to make a large, squarish bed, where herbs could be mixed with bright annuals such as eschscholzia and Shirley poppies, with Iceland and Welsh poppies too. "I'm a very bright person," said Mrs Mackintosh. "I love colour." Poppies, and other annuals, could deliver as much as she wanted. There was space for a bench either side of the massive chimney stack, where you could sit with your back against the west wall of the house, looking out at the sun setting over Esthwaite. Thyme from the herb garden would soon creep out and colonise the cracks between the flagstones. Unfortunately, there was already a snake in this Eden. An oil tank had got to the sunny south wall behind the Mackintoshes. Colour-washed trellis, covered with sweet peas or nasturtiums, will have to be thrown up as a disguise. Even so, it worried me. Who on earth could be mad enough to waste a south-facing wall in Cumbria on an oil tank?

CUTTINGS

NEWS FROM THE GARDENERS' WORLD

A SNOWDROP Study Day will be held at the National Trust's garden, Anglesey Abbey, Lode, Cambs on Thursday 11 February (11am-3.30pm). Dr Aaron Davies, will talk about wild species. Richard Ayres, head gardener at Anglesey, will explain how the garden's collection of snowdrops has increased and evolved over the years. Rod Leeds will lecture on the best snowdrops to use in the garden. After lunch, there will be a guided walk round the garden and species snowdrops will be available for sale. For details, or to book a place (tickets £25) on the study day, contact Lady Nourse, Dullingham House, Dullingham, Newmarket, Norfolk CB8 9TP (01638 508186).



The sweet pea has been in Britain for 300 years A-Z Botanical

THIS YEAR marks a milestone for the sweet pea in Britain. It is 300 years since the first seeds were sent to Dr Uvedale, an Enfield schoolmaster, by Franciscus Cupani, a Sicilian monk. The seed firm Unwins, which specialises in sweet peas, is introducing several new varieties to mark the tricentenary. 'Sir Cliff', named after Cliff Richard, is a striking rosy-purple colour. 'Rosy Dawn' was bred by crossing a large, frilly Spencer sweet pea, 'Mrs Bernard Jones', with the 19th-century variety 'America', which, though small, had flowers marked with a distinctive

pattern of contrasting rays. The new variety has flowers much bigger than the norm, while imprinted with rays of orange-pink. Some experts favour autumn sowing. Mice have dissuaded me from that. I sow in late January or early February, setting seven seeds in a 5-in pot. Water, cover with cling film, then leave the pot until the seedlings poke through. This happens very quickly. Over-watering is fatal while the seeds are germinating. Like other legumes, sweet pea seeds can absorb too much water for their own good, which causes the cells to self-destruct. Top growers sow on a

thin layer of sharp sand spread on compost, then cover the seeds with more compost. Set outside as soon as you can. Seedlings are hardy and grow leggy if they are kept inside too long. Plant in permanent positions in late March or early April. For Unwins' catalogue, call 01945 588522. TWENTY-ONE MORE trees have been added to the Great Trees of London register and given green plaques by the London Tree Forum. They include Britain's tallest plane tree, beside the Thames at Richmond; London's oldest plane, in nearby Barnes; the Kenley House

oak in Croydon; and an ancient churchyard yew in Charles Darwin's village of Downe. For details of the Great Trees and how to nominate one, contact the London Tree Forum, PO Box 15146, London WC2B 6SJ.

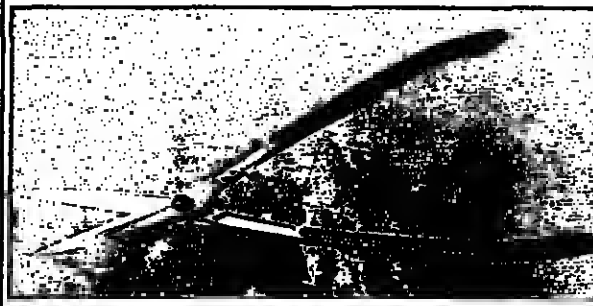
THE EAST Anglian seedsmen Marshalls are inviting customers to trial a new potato, 'Osprey'. Anyone who orders two or more 6kg packs of potatoes from the catalogue will get five free 'Osprey' tubers. The potato was bred from 'Kestrel' and is an early maincrop variety, with good resistance to scab, and a smooth skin, marked with shallow purple eyes, like the Scottish favourite 'Cairnora'.

In Marshalls' own trials, 'Osprey' produced at least 5lb of potatoes from each plant and was ready to dig by late July.

Two dozen different kinds of potato are listed in Marshalls' catalogue, from 'Swift', the earliest of earlies, to 'Pink Fir Apple', the gourmet potato that need not be harvested until October. 'Pink Fir Apple' has another advantage, too. The tubers do not sprout in the sack at this time of the year, as so many other kinds do. Try it. Once you have tasted it, you will never want to be without it. For a copy of Marshalls' catalogue, write to them at Wisbech, Cambs PE13 2RF or call 01945 466711.

THE INDEPENDENT Lightweight Gardening

Shears - only £19.95 inc. p&p



SAVE £10 OFF R.R.P.

Weighing in at just 24ozs, these super-slim Eckman shears are a real pleasure to use and so sharp, they'll even cut paper as neatly as a pair of scissors! They're manufactured from extremely tough but incredibly lightweight aluminium alloy. And at 2ft in length with razor sharp blades, they're longer than conventional shears and will slice through stems up to 1 1/2" thick.

The blades are hardened and tempered for extra durability and can easily be removed for sharpening or replacement if required. Aching muscles and fatigue are greatly reduced due to their fine balance, positive cutting action and overall lightness of construction.

The price to readers is just £19.95 including p&p and an Eckman 2 year no quibble guarantee - it represents a saving of £10 on the MRRP.

How to order:
Phone 0181 540 9696
for credit card orders

Or fill in the coupon quoting your ACCESS/VISA number, or send with crossed cheque/postal orders, no cash please, to:

The Independent Lightweight Shears Offer,
Truwell House, Lombard Road,
London SW19 3TZ.

This offer is subject to availability and UK mainland readers only. Please allow up to 28 days for delivery. If not completely satisfied return within 7 days for a full refund.

Please send me _____ Pair(s) of Lightweight Shears @ £19.95 per pair inc. p&p.

I enclose a crossed cheque for £ _____ (address on back) made payable to: INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPERS (UK) LTD (INC21) or debit my Access/VISA account by this amount. My card number is: _____

Expiry Date: _____

Signature: _____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

Post Code: _____

Send to: THE INDEPENDENT LIGHTWEIGHT SHEARS OFFER, Truwell House, Lombard Road, London SW19 3TZ.
[Please tick this box if you do not wish to receive further offers from us.]
[We will not pass your details to any other company.]
[We will not pass your details to any other company.]

go
as worth
ing about
page 7 of
endent Magazine

Time to badger the scientists?

COUNTRY MATTERS



DUFF
HART-DAVIS

Tim and Sarah Pain, who farm near Tortworth in Gloucestershire, have lost their entire dairy herd. Once they had 80 Friesians; but again and again their cows reacted to routine tests for bovine tuberculosis - transmitted, they are certain, by badgers.

Two weeks ago the last of the cows went for slaughter. The farm is now "closed down" - no cattle are allowed in or out. The compensation paid by the Government is not enough to keep the Pains going, and they are desperate at the loss of their livelihood.

So it was that Tim's sister-in-law June called a public meeting to air the whole question of badgers and TB, and on Monday night more than 200 people crowded into a local roadhouse to hear the views of experts working on the problem.

But the gathering nearly did not take place at all, because in the middle of the day the manager of the hostelry temporarily lost his nerve: fearing disruption by animal-rights activists, he ordered the event to be cancelled, and it took the organisers three frantic hours to convince him that there was no need to panic.

Such are the tensions aroused by Brock and his way of life. As it turned out, no extremists appeared, and the meeting remained relatively good tempered; but there were plenty of barbed exchanges, and explosive emotions simmered beneath the surface.

The various speakers sketched in relevant recent history. Badgers are now a fully protected species, and nobody may cull them or interfere with their setts without special permission. Immunity from persecution by humans has sent the national population soaring, from about 250,000 in the late Eighties to more than 400,000 today.

The only large-scale cull now carried out is the unintentional one on the roads: some 50,000 animals are killed by vehicles every year.

The correlation between badgers and TB in cattle was first noticed in the Seventies, and the earliest cull of badgers by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) was carried out on a farm in Dorset in 1975. Removing badgers from an area of 3,000 acres, by gassing and trapping, eliminated TB in cattle for the time being; a similar cull round Thornbury in the Severn Vale, was equally successful.



TB or not TB? They may look cute but are badgers the cause of the bovine tuberculosis which is wiping out entire dairy herds?

Jack A Bailey/Ardea

Yet public sentiment in favour of badgers proved to be so strong that successive governments backed off from culling; gassing of setts was stopped in 1982, replaced by an interim policy of trapping and shooting, and in 1997 almost all control measures ceased.

Meanwhile, the number of herds infected with TB leapt from 143 in 1990 to 515 seven years later. The trouble is concentrated in Britain's South-west, Cornwall being the hardest-hit county, Gloucestershire the second worst.

Earlier Government inquiries - by Lord Zuckerman in 1980, and Professor Dunnet in 1986 - failed to devise a viable long-term strategy.

The latest report, published by Professor John Krebs last year, advocated further research - and on Monday the main speech was given by Professor John Bourne, the distinguished scientist heading the independent group appointed to

carry out a new programme of trials.

The latest idea is to run comparative experiments in 10 separate sets of "triplets", each to consist of three contiguous areas of similar size. In one - the "proactive" area - all badgers will be caught in baited cage traps and shot. In the second, the "reactive" area, badgers will be culled only around sites of infection in cattle; in the third, the survey area, only general observations will be made. The first culs have already been carried out at Putford, in Devon, where more than 230 badgers have been eliminated.

Prof Bourne was at pains to emphasise the need for a full scientific investigation. "The wholesale eradication of badgers is not a strategy we can adopt for the long term," he said. His team is searching for a "sustainable policy".

There was no doubting his expertise or his sincerity. But he talked

for far too long - 45 minutes - and when he drifted off into such rarefied concepts as the need for "multi-risk variate analysis of retrospective data", he lost most of his audience. Angry murmurs began to arise, in ripe Gloucestershire accents: "That's enough bloody science. Let's have some common sense."

More down-to-earth was Dr. Chris Cheeseman, the man in charge of a long-running experiment, in Woodchester Park, near Stroud, where badgers have been baited with peanuts and golden syrup, captured, tested, released, radio-tracked and generally studied for more than 15 years.

Research in that area has thrown up many anomalies. Numbers of badgers in the long, wooded valley are extraordinarily high - 25 adults to the square kilometre; but there appears to be no relationship between population density and the incidence of disease.

On the contrary: infestations seem to go in cycles, and outbreaks of TB apparently occur as a result of badgers changing their patterns of movement.

Thus human intervention, in the form of culling and the creation of voids, may make matters worse rather than better. As Dr. Cheeseman put it, "perturbation appears to be the downside of control".

In his view TB is mostly transmitted through urine, droppings and saliva deposited on grassland, especially permanent pasture, where badgers hunt for worms, and much of their contamination is placed along "linear features" such as walls, ditches and hedges. In conditions favourable to the TB bacillus, it can survive for up to 11 months in this environment.

All this was good, interesting stuff. Yet the burden of the evening was that scientists still have a poor understanding of the subject. Why

- people wanted to know - has MAFF been so dilatory and secretive about badgers for the last two decades?

Why are we still so far from producing vaccines that would immunise both badgers and cattle? What, above all, is going to happen in the seven years that it is estimated, Professor Bourne's team will need to complete its trials? In the view of many, the situation in the South-west is already out of control.

What farmers want is a Government policy that will enable more badger culs to be made in hot-spots where the incidence of TB is particularly severe. As one woman put it, "The crazy thing is, it's illegal to kill the vermin that are causing the trouble. If it were rats or rabbits, we could take matters into our own hands. But because it's badgers, our hands are tied."

The difficulty is, most people do not see badgers as vermin; there would be an outcry if widespread

culling were reintroduced. A notable absentee from Monday's meeting was Dr Elaine King, Conservation Officer for the National Federation of Badger Groups (NFBG) and a leading champion of the species.

The federation, which has 85 groups and 20,000 members, has been pressing for more open-mindedness on the whole question; but Dr King herself had been warned off attending, as it was thought her presence might cause chaos. She did, however, send a representative in the form of Pauline Kidner, who delighted the audience by admitting that the NFBG is in favour of culling animals known to be infected.

That was one of the few crumbs of comfort the farmers derived from an evening full of interest but offering little hope of immediate relief. As several speakers remarked, the issues involved - unlike the face of the animal under scrutiny - are anything but black and white.

WIN ONE OF 20 COPIES OF

'THE TULIP' BY ANNA PAVORD

The story of the flower that has made men mad

THE TULIP is not a gardening book. It is the story of a flower that has made men mad. Greed, desire, anguish and devotion have all played their part in the development of the tulip from a wild flower of the Asian steppes to the worldwide phenomenon it is today.

No other flower has ever carried so much cultural baggage; it charts political upheavals, illuminates social behaviour, mirrors economic booms and busts, and plots the ebb and flow of religious persecution.

Sumptuously illustrated with 120 pages of full colour illustrations, this beautifully produced book will become a bible, a unique source book, a universal gift book and a joy to all who possess it. For your chance to win one of these wonderful books simply dial the number below, answer the following question on the line and leave your name, full address and a daytime contact number.

Q: From whence did the tulip originate?

CALL 0906 470 0929

Calls cost 60p per minute and should last no longer than two minutes. Winners will be picked at random after the lines close at midnight on Sunday 31 January 1999. There are no alternative prizes or cash substitutes. Normal Independent rules apply. The Editor's decision is final.

BLOOMSBURY



Worms are a favourite snack for badgers Ardea

NATURE NOTES

EARTHWORMS FORM the most important item in a badger's diet. They are made vulnerable by their habit of coming to the surface whenever the weather is warm, and lying out during the hours of darkness.

They cannot see or hear, but they are sensitive to light and vibration and usually keep one end anchored in a tunnel so that they can beat a quick retreat if they sense danger. (It is the four pairs of chaetae, or bristles, on each segment that enable the creatures to move by bodily contractions.) But badgers hunt so stealthily that they often take them by surprise, scooping several within a minute.

and one animal may put away 200 worms during a single night. Moles also depend largely on earthworms for sustenance, and many birds eat them with relish.

Fortunately worms exist in immense quantities: it is estimated that an acre of good pasture contains from 100,000 to 3 million. They take a year to mature, and live up to 10 years.

They eat decaying organisms, but also take in soil and tiny pebbles. Their tunnelling and feeding aerate and drain the soil, and worms also improve its structure by drawing organic material into their burrows.

DUFF HART-DAVIS

CLASSIFIED: INDEPENDENT TRADERS

Gardening

REMOTE CONTROL GARAGE DOORS

Nothing touches a
**Phoenix 2000
Garage Door**

It's way ahead

of the competition

- Remote control with a smooth roll-up operation
- Totally maintenance free
- Top quality manufacture yet at the same price as inferior doors
- Secure automatic locking mechanism
- Fully guaranteed

PHOENIX

call FREE for information

0800 29 86 599

To advertise in this section please call the Independent Traders Team on 0171 293 2323.

Mobility

INDEPENDENCE

QUALITY - VALUE - SERVICE

BRITISH DESIGNED & BUILT

SAVE

BUY DIRECT

from THE BRITISH MANUFACTURER

RENT OR BUY

FREE HOME TRIAL

call HORIZON MOBILITY

0800 018 2603

Not just a British Company... A BRITISH MANUFACTURER

Stairlift Rentals.

Call us now on freephone

0800 19 19 19

For a free no obligation quote.

• Direct from the manufacturer

• Next day installation available nationwide

• Rent or buy

• New or reconditioned

GIVE YOUR LIFE A LIFT

Independent Traders advertising

also appears on page 9.

Gardening

Woodland nursery grows wild flower bulbs for planting now

"In the green"

Marlowe 100 for £12.50

Greenhouse: a mixture of single and double flowering varieties

100 for £10

Wild Dahlias: 50 for £12.50

Wild Anemones: 25 for £2.50

Prices include delivery and free information with flower catalogue with full cultural instructions

Mike Thomas, Marlow, Bucks. Tel: 01494 223 779

House & Home

MARLOW ANTIQUES CENTRE

For a wide range of

antiques and collectibles including

Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian

furniture, glass and china, jewellery and

second-hand books, for that special gift.

Open 10am - 5pm

Sat 10am - 3pm, Sun 11am - 4pm

35 Station Rd, Marlow, Bucks.

Tel: 01628 473 223

AUTOMATIC ROLL-UP GARAGE DOORS

Good looking roll up garage doors that can be operated automatically from the comfort of your car

NATIONWIDE

01929 554901

Worthington, Derbyshire

Worthington, Derbyshire

Worthington, Derbyshire

Worthington, Derbyshire

Worthington, Derbyshire

Worthington, Derbyshire

Worthington, Derbyshire

Worthington, Derbyshire

Worthington, Derbyshire

Worthington, Derbyshire

Worthington, Derbyshire

Worthington, Derbyshire

INDEPENDENT ADVICE FOR THE INDEPENDENT TRAVELLER:
FROM THE ONLY NATIONAL NEWSPAPER TRAVEL SECTION THAT REFUSES FREE TRIPS

The Aegean's crescent of fire

A midwinter visit to Santorini fully reveals the volcanic cataclysm that has shaped this extraordinary Greek island. By Simon Calder

Olympic scandals – they've been in the news all week, so here's another one: it's a scandal that about the only way to reach the Aegean island of Santorini in winter is on the Greek national airline, Olympic. Consequently you will pay a small fortune to get there, and you may not be able to leave when you planned. But while the means may be less than ideal, the end justifies the journey.



To stand at the top of the near-sheer cliff that vanishes into the Aegean is to feel you are on the edge of disaster. Wintry clouds glower darkly, while slick, black rocks usher your eye down to the surf crashing with fury and futility against the western shore.

Let your gaze follow the white-flecked crescent of coastline and, when the land ends, allow your imagination to complete the circle, as it might a young moon. The lunar analogy is apt, because looming from the sea are heaps of debris straight from the NASA props department. The word "calamity" is barely appropriate for what happened here.

There came a sound, as if from within the earth. Zeus's hollow thunder boomed, awful to hear.

The horses lifted heads towards the sky. And pricked their ears; while strange fear fell on us.

Euripides was writing five centuries before Christ, but the event he was quite possibly describing happened at least a millennium earlier. At some fateful instant between 1500 and 1625BC, the always abrasive plate tectonics of the eastern Mediterranean climaxed in a catastrophic eruption that tore the core from an island the size of the Isle of Wight. It wasn't the Atlantis of myth, but it was a thriving community.

When you survey the surviving fragments of one of the biggest volcanic eruptions in the past 10 millennia, you feel in alarmingly close contact with the earth's crust. Present-day Santorini (also known as Thira) comprises a scattering of crumpled bits tentatively attached to the rest of the planet.

The impact of the erupting volcano changed the ancient world, but in Greece there is clearly no such concept as seismic blight; even though little remained beyond a semicircle resembling a half-submerged Olympic ring, man clawed his way back on to the largest surviving fragment of the island. Santorini has found a post-apocalyptic role as a community dependent on agriculture and tourism.

Climb the highest point of the island – Mount Ilias, around 600 metres above the simmering sea – and you can see how scruffily the repopulation has sprawled across the eastern slope.

Luckily, Santorini's main town, Fira, embraces all the values of an idyllic Cycladic settlement: a mix of delicate white cottages on the crest of the caldera, laced with narrow lanes that resonate with church bells. In summer, torrents of tourists swirl through the town, but in mid-winter your only company is likely to be a community of funny little cats. Your problems, meanwhile, are likely to be considerable. The good thing about the Greek islands out of season, it is commonly said, is that they are wonderfully quiet. That inoffensive word "quiet" conceals a consensus of closure, the concept that an entire island can be operated on a skeleton staff. The Volcano Hotel, the Atlantis restaurant and the Enigma disco are all shut down, as are almost all of the "rooms" that cater for the summer's flotillas of backpackers.

Furthermore, the weather is frequently foul. I am staying at the ambitiously named Porto Fira Hotel, which resembles a warren of whitewashed Hobbit holes. The rain has been bombarding for a couple of days now, splashing against the whitewashed walls. Every so often the grey is enlivened by a flash of lightning that heralds an Atlantic rumbling of thunder. The electric heater in the room has just fused after I tried to dry my sodden socks on it. At 2am last night, the only surviving mosquito in the northern hemisphere managed to insinuate itself into my room, despite the door and window being sealed against the cold, and died famously.

Now and again, though, the sun emerges and makes it all worthwhile, when shafts of gold light play poetically upon the ragged wilderness. And, if you meander along to the patch of ground that serves as a bus station, you can travel around



All quiet now – but for how long? The volcano that shaped the geography of Santorini is still active

Simon Calder

the crescent of Santorini to a place where the solitude of winter is rewarded.

You know Pompeii? Imagine a city twice as old, which suffered the same volcanic smothering but is preserved even more perfectly. You may doubt this when the bus-driver drops you off by a iron gate in the far south west of Santorini. But persevere: wander into a field with a smattering of buildings and, beyond, you find a slender ravine covered with brutish corrugated iron. This ungainly roof serves as insulation for

the miraculous resurrection of life in the second millennium BC.

Four or five thousand people lived in Akrotiri before the eruption. They were accomplished mariners, which provided them with both wealth from trade, and ideas from ancient Egypt. Nearly 4,000 years ago their city was accomplished in its technology – the walls of two- and three-storey buildings bear witness to advanced engineering – and its artistry, with vibrant wall paintings and elaborate pottery depicting a sophisticated society.

The art has been appropriated by Athens, and you will need to visit room 48 of the National Archaeological Museum in the capital to gasp at the intense images. But the fortunate winter visitor may encounter Professor Christos Doumas, who has been excavating the site for three decades. As you wander around streets whose tangle mimics the modern-day town, he will explain yet more similarities to the 20th century: how certain buildings served as shops and banks to a busy, wealthy community. And he will

point out the grave of Spiridon Marinatos, the man whose meticulous research led him to uncover Akrotiri beneath many metres of volcanic dust in 1967. Professor Marinatos died in a fall at the site in 1974.

Intriguingly, his is the only human corpse known to exist in Akrotiri. The citizens appear to have been fully aware of the vulnerability of their location. It appears that before the eruption they fled the city, thoughtfully leaving jars full of grain beneath doorways – then, as now, this was the safest place in an earthquake.

Just as a door frame could not withstand the weight of tons of volcanic ash, so there remains no trace of the population ever having made safe landfall, given the scale of the tidal wave that accompanied the eruption. Euripides again: *To the sea-beaten shore! We looked, and saw a monstrous wave that soared into the sky.*

The reverberations of the volcano are still being felt. Last century, for example, the French engineer Ferdinand de Lesseps used volcanic ash quarried from Santorini to make the impervious concrete essential to the building of the Suez Canal – a fundamental artery for the modern world.

Back on the island, though, there remains one more ritual for the winter visitor. If you can gather together a few stragglers left over from the summer season, you can charter a fishing boat for about £50 from the timid little harbour that huddles at the foot of the cliff. From here, you

can appreciate the wide-screen wonder of the rock face, and discern many more colours than the black that first registered, with electric greens and rust reds prominent.

The boatman will steer out across the submerged crater, towards a recent creation: the island of Nea Kameni ("new burnt island"), directly above the centre of the crater. It has emerged over the past three centuries, but fits no preconceptions of what a Greek island should look like; the earth has simply spewed volcanic wreckage into the Aegean, with the lava freezing where it fell.

Talking of freezing; if you are feeling brave, or foolhardy, or working for a radio producer keen on some audio vérité, you may plunge from the boat into the wintry water and paddle frantically around in search of the promised 40°C currents.

The sulphuric steam rising from the centre of the island draws you along a narrow inlet, and reminds you of Euripides's "foaming blood and breath from the deep sea". But soon the crush of rocks gets too intense and you retreat to the cooler, choppy Aegean, where you can reflect on the fascination about Thira that goes way beyond its rugged beauty – a place where history meets hydrodynamics, volcanology meets archaeology, and science meets fiction.

Gazing at the destruction poses some big questions. Where and when will there next be an eruption of such magnitude? Could Thira itself ever change the world again? And where's that towel?

FACT FILE

Getting there: Simon Calder's ticket – from London via Athens to Santorini, with a side-trip to Crete – cost £359 on Olympic Airways (0171-409 3400).

Once the summer flights begin and the ferries start a more regular service, it will be much cheaper to reach the island. The peak-season alternatives are as follows:

- (1) Taking a scheduled flight from London to Athens on British Airways (0345 223111), Cronus Air (0171-580 3500), easyJet (0870 6 000 000), Olympic Airways (0171-409 3400) or Virgin Atlantic (01293 747747), followed by a ferry from Piraeus.
- (2) The same idea but using a

charter from a range of UK airports to Athens.

(3) A charter flight to Heraklion, on Crete, and a ferry from there.

(4) A direct charter flight from Gatwick to Santorini, perhaps as part of a package; Kosmar Holidays (0181-882 6999) is one of relatively few companies to go there, starting in May.

Getting around: Bus services around Santorini operate year-round, with a maximum fare of about £1. Car rental is cheap and widely available. Cycling is not a happy way to travel around the island in winter.

If you plan to visit Santorini as part of an island-hopping itinerary, then Greek Island

Hopping 1998 by Frewin Poffley (Thomas Cook, £12.95) is the essential survey of all ferry services plus entertainingly pithy descriptions of the islands. The 1999 edition (same price) will be published on 12 March.

More information: Hellenic Tourism Organisation, 4 Conduit Street, London W1R 0DJ (0171-734 5997). A good source of books is Hellenic Bookservice, 91 Fortress Road, London NW5 1AG (0171-267 9499).

'The Volcano That Changed the World', presented by Simon Calder and produced by David Sharp, will be broadcast on BBC Radio 4 at 8pm next Thursday, 4 February

YOU ARE probably a public-spirited sort of person, keen to enhance the enjoyment of people who follow in your holiday footsteps. So when, on the plane home from your package holiday, you are given a questionnaire to fill in, you dutifully appraise everything from the hotel check-in to the in-flight service, in the hope that your views will lead to happier travels for others.

But if you have done this on a Thomson holiday, prepare to be directed to a new travel agent. Britain's biggest holiday company has built up a mailing list of people who have filled in a "customer satisfaction questionnaire" on their holidays in recent years. This week, the database was put to use when half a million households were sent mailshots urging people to change their travel agent – in my case, recommending that I try one 200 miles away.

The "Thomson Preferred Agent" is Miss Ellie's International of Heaton Chapel, in Greater Manchester. No doubt it is a fine agency. But I like my



SIMON CALDER
Filled in a form on a Thomson holiday? Prepare to be directed to a new agent...

In a spirit of encouraging competition, I shall be paying a visit to Miss Ellie's International in the next couple of weeks. So far, the best deal to reach it is on Virgin Trains, for £19 return. I wonder if there's anything cheaper? It's at times like this that you need a good travel agent.

NIC STUBBS, of Northampton, had a less happy experience with a branch of Going Places. Referring to last week's story

about airlines pretending that taxes will rise from Monday, he writes: "If you think airlines are being sneaky about price rises, Going Places are pretty blatant about it. Last week I went to book a return flight for one from Birmingham to Dublin, for the end of April. I was quoted a reasonable price of £70, plus £10 tax and £1 SAR (whatever that is)."

"Then the assistant said 'Oh, that comes to less than £100, so we charge you £10 extra.' I went to an independent travel agent the following day and booked my flight without any surcharge."

"I can appreciate that they may not have made a huge amount from my booking at either travel agent, but I know which one I shall do business with in the future."

Mr Stubbs also hints that the second agent may have been rather more knowledgeable: "The independent travel agent knew the code for Dublin airport without having to ask me." The code in question is the tricky-to-remember DUE.

FIVE MONTHS from tonight, expect wailing from cigarette and drink manufacturers. Duty-free sales on intra-EU flights and ferries come to an end on 30 June. The demise of duty-frees within Europe influenced P&O Stena Line's decision to end the ferry link between Newhaven and Dieppe. As Gerard Gilbert predicted in these pages last month, the plug has now been pulled and the last ship will sail tomorrow.

Happily, a rival ferry company thinks it can make a go of the historic route. Hoverspeed (0990 240241) starts a summer-only service on 10 April.

This is excellent news for eclipse fans, who will be able to watch the sun's disappearance on 11 August from Normandy. The ferry is already booked for that date, but three- and five-day return tickets are available. I'd love to view the eclipse from west Cornwall instead, but Great Western Trains yesterday said it was still unable to take bookings for the event. The train operator said Railtrack has not yet revealed what services it will allow to Penzance in August.

EXPLORE

River Journeys & Sea Treks

A selection of unique holidays from the UK's leading adventure tour company

Cruise down the Nile from Luxor on a traditional riverboat chartered exclusively for Explore travellers. Enjoy the leisurely pace of river life and visits to sacred Egyptian temples.

Embark on a journey of exploration through the Indonesian Archipelago aboard a two-masted Buginese schooner. Visit Bali and Lombok, track the Komodo Dragon and see the smoking volcanoes of Flores.

Sail along Turkey's scenic "Turquoise Coast" on a traditional wooden gulet. Discover charming fishing villages and hidden bays, and swim or snorkel in beautiful clear blue waters.

Hark back to a bygone age aboard an authentic, ocean-going square rigged. Stand watch or take the helm as you voyage between the paradise islands of the South Pacific.

Unwind on a relaxing cruise through the lesser-known islands of the western Aegean. Discover the real Greece – secluded coves, medieval monasteries and waterside tavernas.

Explore the Orinoco delta – a luxuriant mangrove forest of outstanding beauty. Then journey by canoe through virgin rainforest towards the spectacular Angel Falls. A great adventure for the real explorer!

Choose from over 200 small group holidays in 96 countries.

Hikes & Treks, Wildlife Safaris, River Journeys & Sea Treks, Wilderness Experiences, Cultural Adventures.

Tours from 8 days to 4 weeks. Prices from under £400 to over £2000.

Call **01252 760 100** for your free copy of our colour brochure

Explore Worldwide (IND), Aldershot GU11 1LQ
www.explore.co.uk Fully bonded ATOL 2595

Here's some we didn't do earlier

The film *Hideous Kinky* has triggered a rush to Morocco. Guide-book writer Barnaby Rogerson offers the latest insider advice



Will more British tourists flock to Marrakech after the release of the film *'Hideous Kinky'* starring Kate Winslet?

Sophie Baker

It is, as they say in Morocco, the "English Season". Like some strange breed of bird that migrates to its own discordant calendar, the English have taken to visiting Morocco in February and March. These are the very months that the country is considered to be off season by the rest of Europe.

The relief with which we tackle the prospect of a bit of weather is our last remaining national characteristic, transcending the divisions of class, age, race and fashionable intelligence. The chance of being delayed by the odd flash flood in a desert wadi, or by a snowstorm at a pass in the High Atlas mountains, excites rather than diminishes the interest.

This year, the English season will be even more pronounced due to the release of *Hideous Kinky*, Esther Freud's warm and funny evocation of a hippy family in existential crisis in mid-Seventies

Marrakech, that has been made into a movie. Kate Winslet, who plays the mother, is set to revive our passion for all things Moroccan, starting, of course, with its men.

It is also "my season". I get invited to tea, to dinner, and get charmed on the telephone by a spreading nexus of friends of friends who want to talk their Moroccan holiday plans through with me. It is flattering to be wanted. They want routes; they want restaurants; they want hotels; they want a three-week forecast on the weather; they want telephone numbers.

So I talk numbers - my numbers. "Look at page 528 for the Palais Salam", "look at page 175 for the Mahdi in the mountains". It is a sad and obvious attempt to boost the sales of my guide and history books. But they want more. They want special things: yet unwritten tips; unknown restaurants; and undiscovered ruins. It is no good pretending that you have held nothing

back. You must produce a plum: one juicy bit of intimate travel advice offered up in a hushed tone; a whispered piece of "for your ears only" confidence.

It is an easy task. By their nature, guidebooks are already out of date by the time they are printed. Such-and-such a hotel has closed or opened while restaurants change with the wind, or the chef. In the words of Saki, "she was a good cook as cooks go, and as good cooks go she went". So here it is: the inside track on Morocco during the last 12 months.

One new but gorgeous small hotel to report is in a converted courtyard townhouse deep within the old walled city of Marrakech. La Maison Arabe is reclusive but fairly easy to find on your second or third attempt. It stands on one of the alleys opposite the great 16th-century Bab Doukalla Mosque. It is as removed from the tourist throng as a visit to this city in the Thirties.

During my childhood it was a famous but seedy restaurant, and was run by the ex-cook of the Glaoui Pasha, who either cooked beautifully or not at all. On one such latter occasion, I remember, as an impressionable teenager, eating a candle-lit cheese omelette in a magnificent, dark, cold dining room huddled beside an enormous bronze charcoal burner. I have never really recovered from the experience and have been searching for uncomfortable grandeur ever since.

The old chef needed to drink to chase away the memories of a morning outside the Bab Doukalla in 1957. The chief henchman of the fallen Pasha had been dragged through the streets, rubber ringed, and was then burned alive on the rubbish dump. The mob's vengeance even extended to the Pasha's fleet of motor cars.

The restaurant was closed on my next visit and now, some 20 years later, it has been beautifully reno-

vated by Fabrizio Ruspoli. Fabrizio is an Italian prince - or if he isn't, he could be. In the hotel hall there hangs a portrait of his grandfather, Edmondo, outdoing any mere Gainsborough boy in the elegance of his ruffs and lace.

Ruspoli is, in any case, part of the expatriate landscape: his grandmother was a redoubtable figure in Tangier's highly competitive society; his aunt kept wolfhounds on her farm in the Ourika valley, and all the great restaurants nearby, such as Charles de Poso's Villa Rosa, seem to be run by his devoted friends.

La Maison Arabe has just 11 rooms and serves no meals, aside from breakfast and tea. It has no pool but instead boasts a succession of elegant, well-connected guests.

The only other major event in the Moroccan hotel world has been the sale and closure of the celebrated Palais Jamai Hotel in Fez for a much-needed renovation. This once acclaimed hotel, the unsung star of

Paul Bowles' novel *The Spider's House*, has been disappointing visitors for years. Hopefully the new owners will cherish the splendid old dining room and the remnants of the old palace garden that were not destroyed when they built the swimming pool.

The central role of the Palais Jamai has anyway been usurped by such places as the newly opened La Maison Biene. This, the 100-year-old townhouse of a distinguished old Fassi family, the El Abbadi's, has become an opulent courtyard restaurant where the food has won plaudits even from the fastidious locals. The upstairs, its corridors lined with old lawbooks and leather-bound commentaries, has been converted into three suites, each complete with dressing rooms, a sitting room and cavernous bathrooms. Its position, just off Place de l'Istiglal, one of the centres for the evening paseo, and opposite the walled garden of the Batha Palace

Museum, could hardly be bettered. From the café on the rooftop you can look out across the massed roofs of the three component cities of medieval Fes. It stands on the edge of the 13th-century walled quarter of Fes el Jedid, within five minutes walk of the Bab Boujeloud gate into the ancient alleys of Fes el Bali. It is owned and managed by Mehdi el Abbadi, the grandson of the Cadi, the Muslim judge, who first built the house.

La Maison Arabe, 1 Derb Asshebb, Bab Doukalla, Marrakech. For a reservation speak to Nabila Dakir, tel 00 212 4 39 12 33, fax 00 212 4 41 37 15. Prices are between a £120-200 for a room.

La Maison Biene, 2 Place de l'Istiglal, Batha, 30,000 Fes, tel and fax 00 212 5 74 18 43. Prices start at £150.

Barnaby Rogerson is the author of the *'Cadogan Guide to Morocco'* (£12.99)

SOMETHING TO DECLARE

NEWS FROM THE TRAVEL WORLD

Trouble spots:

Vietnamese border crossings. "My wife and I have just returned from a tailor-made package, which was intended to give us a taste of southern China and Vietnam using the recently restored rail link between Kunming and Hanoi. When we arrived at Hanoi, the Chinese border town, the customs police indicated in pidgin English that our Vietnam visas were no good. The visas had been obtained months in advance, via our British travel agent, from the Vietnamese Embassy in London.

"The border police said that they were not valid and a \$400 (£250) fine would sort the problem out. Needless to say, we were outraged by such a large demand and sat tight in our seats refusing to give any money. I asked to telephone the British mission in Hanoi, but was refused amidst a lot of laughter by the police officers. After considerable protests, I was taken from the train, leaving my wife alone with five police officers.

"Eventually I was allowed to telephone the travel agent's representative in Saigon, who managed to reduce the 'fine' to

\$200. With time running out, I reluctantly agreed to pay it, but asked for a receipt. This request caused so much anger that I was told I would be arrested and locked up.

"I rejoined the train a few minutes before departure, finding my wife distressed, having experienced a degrading and humiliating search of our clothing. On arrival in Hanoi, we spent the next day trying to get our money back. Eventually the cash was refunded by local agents, yet much of our leisure time was lost whilst writing reports for everybody!"

Mike and Anne Reynolds, Kent

This report is from the new edition of *Wanderlust* magazine, published yesterday, price £2.80; subscriptions: 01753 620426.

The new edition offers a free passport cover (for the Euro-style document). *Wanderlust* has teamed up with *The Independent* to offer a free copy of the magazine, plus a passport cover, to the 10 best tales of tricky/trivial border crossings. Send your entry to: *Passport, Travel Desk, 'The Independent', One Canada Square, London E14 5DL*, to arrive by eleven o'clock on Monday, 8 Feb.

Bargain of the week:

Italy, Denmark or Germany for £80. The winter-fares war on air routes to Europe intensifies next week when Go (0845 60 54321) launches a five-day seat sale. From 7am next Monday until 11pm on Friday 5 February, the British Airways offshoot is cutting prices on all its routes.

Fares from Stansted to Milan, Venice, Copenhagen and Munich are set at £80 return. Tickets to Rome, Lisbon and Bologna cost £70, while Edinburgh is £40.

The deal applies for travel from 15 February to 25 March. Travel is barred on Fridays and Sundays. A two-night minimum stay is required.

True or false: The only way to reach South America's leading tourist attraction is on foot or aboard a Russian-built helicopter?

For the next fortnight, at least, unfortunately true. The railway line from the city of Cuzco to the ancient Inca city of Machu Picchu was blocked

this week by a landslide. Walking to the historic site along the Inca Trail is still possible, but latest reports say it is very crowded. The alternative is a shuttle service operated by a single ex-Soviet helicopter, for a fare of around £100 return. The track is unlikely to be repaired for another two weeks.

A likely story: "My bag's checked in, so the plane will have to wait for me." From Monday onwards, this will no longer work for British Airways passengers. You could be denied boarding and made to wait for the next available plane.

International aviation rules insist that travellers must accompany their luggage, and aircraft captains are not permitted to depart until all passengers with checked-in bags are on board. But computerised

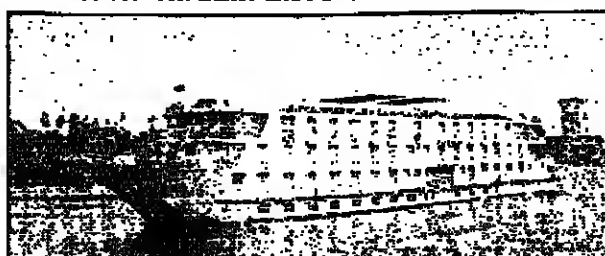
baggage systems are becoming more sophisticated, making it easier for airlines to offload the luggage of tardy passengers.

British Airways has instituted a rule saying all passengers must be at the boarding gate at least 10 minutes before departure. Any later, and staff will use the Baggage Reconciliation System to remove your luggage from the aircraft hold.

You will be given a seat on the next flight, if space is available; for some destinations, the wait could be a week.

A WEEK ON THE NILE

Cruise between Luxor and Aswan on board the MS Ra



7 nights from £455.00

The journey commences with a direct flight from London Gatwick to Luxor to join the MS Ra. Our cruise will include visits to the Valley of the Kings at Thebes, the Colossi of Memnon, the Temple of Edfu, Kom Ombo, the Temple of Philae, Aswan High Dam and

the great temples of Karnak and Luxor.

THE MS RA The MS Ra is a large Nile cruiser purpose built in Britain and accommodating up to 140 passengers. Facilities on board include a restaurant, lounge, bar, sun deck with swimming pool, jacuzzi. All cabins are air conditioned with large picture

windows and have private bathrooms. For a true escape with that magical combination of culture and relaxation this is surely an opportunity that should not be missed.

DEPARTURES & PRICES Mondays - per person in Lower Deck twin 1999 February 1. 8. 32 £475

March 1. 8. 15. 22 £475
April 5. 12. 19 £495
Supplements - per person
Single cabin £150
Upper decks £100
Abu Simbel (by air) £125

Price includes: return air travel, transfers, 7 nights accommodation on board the MS Ra, full board, excursion programme, services of local representatives, UN departure tax. Not included: travel insurance, visa procurement, overseas departure tax, tipping. All prices are subject to change. Our current Conditions of Booking, a copy of which is available on request, shall apply to all reservations.

0171-616 1000

VOYAGES JULES VERNE

21 Dorset Square, London NW1

Travel Promotion: 1-800-4-A-TRIP-2100
Internet: <http://www.vjv.co.uk>
Our offices are open on telephone reservations from 9am to 5pm weekdays & 10am to 5pm at the weekends. For personal contact our office hours are 9am to 5pm weekdays only.

Ireland Live a different life

HOLIDAYS '99

From B&B's to castles, from long weekends to weeks on end, you'll find Ireland's world famous welcome is now warmer than ever. For our full colour brochures, call us free on

0800 55 55 99.

www.irelandholidays.co.uk

LOTTO

The winning Lotto numbers for draw date 28th January 1999 are:

1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
026872	021356	025039	031281	029844

75% of all proceeds from Lotto go directly to fund ActionAid's fight against world poverty.

For details of how to play, please telephone the National Lottery on 01 603 6272.

registered charity no 224467

THE WEEKEND REVIEW
The Independent 30 January 1999
earlier
atest insider advice

THE WEEKEND REVIEW
The Independent 30 January 1999
TEL: 0171 293 2222

صكنا من الامل

TRAVEL/21

OVERSEAS

FAX: 0171 293 2505

The BIG DEAL in USA Car Hire £149 Per week

ABSOLUTELY "FULLY INCLUSIVE"
ONE GREAT LOW RATE RIGHT ACROSS THE STATES AND CANADA

USA Rent a Car has arrived in the UK and for a limited period only, you can take advantage of our incredible introductory low rates starting at just £149 FULLY INCLUSIVE per week and that rate is valid at all our USA and Canadian locations*. We've revolutionised the USA car hire market and nobody benefits more than YOU. Our rates are up to 25% LESS than Alamo or Dollar and we are the ONLY company to have one common rate right across the USA and Canada*.

THE BIG DEAL - NOBODY OFFERS YOU MORE:

- INCLUDED - All Cars Have Air Conditioning And Automatic Transmission.
- INCLUDED - Unlimited FREE Mileage.
- INCLUDED - Collision Damage Waiver (CDW).
- INCLUDED - State Liability Third Party Insurance.
- INCLUDED - Excess Liability Insurance Up To \$1 Million.
- INCLUDED - All State Sales Taxes.
- INCLUDED - All State Surcharges.
- INCLUDED - All Handling Fees.
- INCLUDED - Airport Imposed Fees.
- FREE - One Way Drops Throughout Florida And California.
- FREE - Exclusive USA Discount Vouchers Book Offering \$1500 Worth Of Savings At USA Restaurants, Attractions, Shops, Hotels And Services.
- FREE - \$10 Off Next Hire Voucher.
- FREE - Currency Converter Worth £10.
- FREE - Spouse Driver On All USA Bookings This Month.
- GUARANTEED - "Never Beaten On Price".

ALL FROM JUST £149 PER WEEK* RIGHT ACROSS THE USA AND CANADA.

FREE
Book this month and pay nothing for an extra spouse driver (USA ONLY)

FREE
Superb bonus extra driver - FREE tank of fuel, just \$9 per week extra (USA ONLY)

FREE
USA Rent a Car discount voucher book offering incredible savings of over \$1500 at US restaurants, theme parks, shops and services.

FREE
Book before the end of this month and receive a FREE currency exchanger (worth £10)

FREE
One way drop throughout the whole of Florida and California.

*Separate rates apply to New York/Newark/JFK.
*Peak season surcharges of £20 per week applies between 15 July - 31 August and 20 - 27 December



USA Rent a Car price pledge: We'll NEVER be beaten on price. If you find a lower rate we'll BEAT it. That's guaranteed.

ON-AIRPORT COLLECTION RIGHT ACROSS THE USA AND CANADA
Wherever and whenever you need a car - we're there! Over 1000 locations available.

HUGE RANGE OF VEHICLES
Economy, compact, mid size, full size, luxury, convertible, minivans, maxivans and even motorhomes - We've got the lot!

TOP QUALITY VEHICLES
We only have top quality recent model vehicles on fleet. All air conditioned and with automatic transmission.

BIG DISCOUNTS ON LONG RENTALS
For long rentals of 4 weeks or more we can offer further great savings.

THE LOWEST RATES ON THE MARKET - GUARANTEED!
Our rates are driving the competition crazy and it's no wonder, we're up to 25% lower and we'll always BEAT any company quoting a lower rate.

usa RENT A CAR

CALL: 0171 499 1300
Fax: 0171 491 7073 Motorhome Reservations: 01424 814100
24 Hour Brochureline: 0171 434 0844

Austria
AUSTRIA
LAKES & MOUNTAINS
7 DAYS £89
including COACH AND B&B
IN TOP RESORT
Call 0181-980-7244

Azores
THE AZORES
Aerial, peaceful, birds & views
Call 0181-847 4748

Balearics
VINTAGE SPAIN
Mallorca & Menorca
Call 0181-980-7244

Canaries
BLUE SKY
Canaries, Balearics, Algarve, Florida
Call 0181-847 4748

Cyprus
SPECIALIST
CYPRUS
Call 0181-847 4748

Croatia
TRANSUN
NO.1 SPECIALIST TO CROATIA
7NITS SE - £179
Call 01865 798888

Croatia
THE DALMATIAN RIVIERA
Islands
Call 0800 7317362

Croatia
Discover Croatia
Europe's Best Kept Secret
Call 01452 501978

Eastern Europe
PRAGUE, VIENNA, BUDAPEST
Call 0181-847 4748

Germany
GERMANY
Daily low cost flights
Call 0181-847 4748

Italy
Cycling or Walking
See the great treasures of Tuscany and Umbria
Call 01606 813340

Italy
EXCLUSIVE ITALY
Some of the finest private villas and farmhouses
Call 0171 272 5469

Italy
COTTAGES TO CASTLES
presents the choice collection of self catering properties
Call 01622 726883

Italy
SARDINIA
Call 0181-847 4748

Italy
LAKE GARDA
7 DAYS £99
Call 0181-980-7244

Italy
LA BELLA TOSCANA
Very special farmhouse, villa & apartments
Call 0181-980-7244

Italy
SARDINIA
Call 0181-847 4748

Italy
SARDINIA
Call 0181-847 4748

Portugal
PORTUGAL
Discover the amazing scenery and natural beauty
Call 0181-980-7244

Portugal
THE AZORES
Discover the amazing scenery and natural beauty
Call 0181-980-7244

Portugal
SPAIN
Call 0181-980-7244

Portugal
SPAIN
Call 0181-980-7244

Portugal
neilson
Ski from £169

Resort	Date	Depart	Accommodation	Price
COURCHEVEL	6/2	LGW	Club Htl Cascades HB	£299
BARDONECCHIA	7/2	LGW	2 Peak Hotel HB	£199
MACUGNAGA	7/2	LGW	2 Peak Hotel HB	£169
PAS DE LA CASA	7/2	LGW	Club Htl Llac Negre HB	£399
SERRE CHEVALIER	7/2	LGW	Club Htl Yeli HB	£189
SAUZE D'OULX	14/2	S/DRIVE	2 Peak Hotel B&B	£229
BANFF (CANADA)	17/2	MAN	3 Peak Hotel RO	£349
SOLL	20/2	MAN	Club Hotel Theresa HB	£419
CHAMONIX	20/2	BHX	Chalet Red Mountain	£499
VALMOREL	20/2	LGW	Self Catering	£199
HIMMEDEL (NORWAY)	21/2	STN	Chalet Tinden	£249
PAMPOROV (BULGARIA)	21/2	LGW	2 Peak Hotel HB	£239
MACUGNAGA	21/2	LGW	2 Peak Hotel HB	£239
STEAMBOAT (USA)	24/2	LGW	Chalet Patrice	£449
PLAIN	27/2	LGW	Self Catering	£219
LES MEUNIERES	27/2	LGW	Chalet Montagnes	£419
GILLO (NORWAY)	28/2	STN	3 Peak Hotel HB	£399
BOROVETS (BULGARIA)	28/2	MAN	3 Peak Hotel HB	£299
CLAVIERE	28/2	LGW	2 Peak Hotel HB	£299

Spain
ANDALUCIA
From the Costa del Sol to the Costa de Almeria
Call 0181-980-7244

Spain
THE PICK OF THE ALPS
Inclusive self catering apartment
Call 0181-980-7244

Spain
Erna Low
Call 0171 581 7820

Spain
ALL IN PRICES
Austria France Italy
Call 01273 298 298

Spain
FRANCE-ONLY THE BEST
Great value inclusive French ski holidays
Call 0171 581 7820

Spain
Meribel, Courchevel, Val d'Isere, La Plagne, Chamonix, Verbier, St Anton & Whistler
Call 0181 742 2541

Spain
SKI AUSTRIA
7 DAYS £99
Call 0181-980-7244

Spain
Erna Low
Call 0171 581 7820

Spain
To advertise in this section
please call the Travel Team on 0171 293 2219

Special Interest Holidays

Special Interest Holidays

ENGLISH LAKES, EUROPE, THE WORLD.....

Our range of over 150 different holidays literally spans the globe. Join one of our friendly led walking parties - each graded to suit your ability - and see our wonderful world close at hand. From sightseeing on foot in cities, day rambles through enjoyable countryside to challenging walking in the hills and mountains, there is something for everyone.

RAMBLERS HOLIDAYS: 24 hour brochure line: 01707 339039
2 Church Rd (Box 43), Welwyn Garden, AL8 6PQ
Tel: 01707 331133 Fax: 01707 333276 E-mail: ramblers@diai.pipex.com

EXPLORE
worldwide

A unique selection of small group exploratory holidays from the UK's leading adventure tour company.

Rambles, Hikes & Treks - Alps, Picos, Sierra Nevada, Peloponnese, Cappadocia, Atlas, Kilimanjaro, Himalayas, Tien Shan, Rockies, Sierra Madre, Andes.

Wildlife Safaris - Kenya, Tanzania, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Ghana, South Africa, Madagascar, India, Nepal, Borneo, Canada, Costa Rica, Galapagos.

River Journeys & Sea Treks - Dordogne, Aegean, Nile, Niger, Okavango, Ganges, Yangtze, East Indies, Amazon, Orinoco, Chilean Fjords, South Pacific.

Lost Cities & Ancient Worlds - Delphi, Luxor, Petra, Persepolis, Carthage, Timbuktu, Samarkand, Xian, Angkor, Chichen Itza, Tikal, Machu Picchu.

Choose from over 200 tours in 96 countries.

Tours from 8 days to 4 weeks.
Prices from under £400 to over £2000.

Call 01252 760 100 for your free copy of our colour brochure

Explore Worldwide (UK), Aldershot GU11 1LQ
www.explore.co.uk Fully bonded ATOL/ATOL 295

South East Asia

A wonderful, magical land of adventure, mystery & surprise. You'll find the culture will take your breath away.

Planning to Travel...?
The UK's Premier Independent Travel Show

Independent travellers' world

- Over 200 specialist travel exhibitors
- Specialist equipment & health advice
- Over 130 FREE travel talks
- Job opportunities abroad
- Excellent value flights
- One-stop travel vaccination clinic
- Travel Writing & Photography workshops
- Travelling expeditions & adventures
- Women & Travel Seminar

the world at your fingertips

London, 6-7 February 1999
Glasgow, 20-21 February 1999
Birmingham, 19-20 March 1999

freephone: 0800 328 0888 for details

entry from £5 www.itw.net

Looking for a tour in India... beach and diving, white water rafting, wildlife and trekking in Borneo... mountain peaks and hidden valleys in Pakistan... trek or leisure holiday in Nepal... B&B to 5 star hotels??

We can help!

NEI (UK) Ltd. 01269 823355

email: nei@neimail.com www.neiuk.com TTA-17965

France



Luxury mobile homes & huge superstores on 115 campsites in 8 countries. Only K&K has a Children's Club on every site.

Call today for a brochure

0181 395 8565

www.kandk.co.uk

K&K Holidays

Continental Composite Holidays '99

SAVE UP TO

£239*

with SITE SAVERS

You choose the region... we choose the campsite

CALL FOR A FREE BROCHURE NOW ON

0870 513 4748

quoting ref. code 2470

*Savings apply only from 25 April to 11 May or 12 September to 18 October. Not valid for mobile homes only. Subject to availability. Savings based on 14 nights in a 20-night holiday. Not valid for bookings made more than 12 months in advance. Not valid for bookings made more than 12 months in advance. Not valid for bookings made more than 12 months in advance.

SAVE MONEY - BOOK DIRECTLY

3000+ PRIVATE OWNERS ADVERTISE

Villas & Cottages

Many with pools. FREE on route travel. Coast and country. PHONE FOR A BROCHURE ON

0845 070 1100

Quoted prices include VAT and agency fees

08700 730 730

quoting NH164C

0845 070 1100

08700 730 730

quoting NH164C

0845 070 1100

08700 730 730

quoting NH164C

0845 070 1100

08700 730 730

quoting NH164C

DISCOVER FRANCE

Luxury Mobile Home Holidays in Beautiful Brittany & the Western coast

UP TO 4 CHILDREN TRAVEL FREE

Call 01483 284044 for our brochure

MATTHEWS HOLIDAYS

ATOL 1945

ART NOUVEAU - ON THE BILL FOR 1999:

- Ecole de Nancy 1889-1909

- Galerie Poirel, Nancy

- Ma machine est au fond de bols, musée de l'Ecole de Nancy

- Peinture et Art Nouveau musée Des Beaux-arts

NANCY 1999

Place Stanislas, BP 810-54011, Nancy, Cedex, France

tourisme@nancy.fr http://www.nancy.fr

OVER 50 OTHER CULTURAL EVENTS

Super Sites

MOBILE HOMES

Top coastal sites. West Coast & Med. Low prices.

PHONE FOR A BROCHURE ON

0845 070 2244

Quoted prices include VAT and agency fees

08700 730 730

quoting NH164C

0845 070 1100

08700 730 730

quoting NH164C

0845 070 1100

08700 730 730

quoting NH164C

0845 070 1100

08700 730 730

quoting NH164C

0845 070 1100

08700 730 730

quoting NH164C

0845 070 1100

08700 730 730

quoting NH164C

0845 070 1100

08700 730 730

quoting NH164C

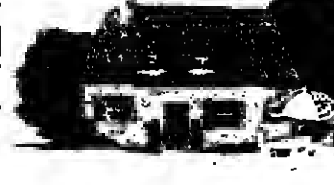
Overseas Travel

Overseas Travel

HOLIDAY HOMES IN FRANCE & SPAIN

DISCOVER NEW WAYS TO ENJOY HOLIDAY FRANCE & SPAIN

The new 1999 Holiday Homes in France and Spain is now available. It features over 1000 self-catering holidays and a great choice of carefully selected hotels.



BOOK EARLY AND
SAVE 20%
ON THE RENTAL PRICE

BROCHURES 0990 143 537 RESERVATIONS 0990 360 360 or see your Travel Agent

CORK & KERRY

FROM

£129

RETURN

SWANSEA CORK FERRIES

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

CORK & KERRY

FROM

£129

RETURN

SWANSEA CORK FERRIES

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

01242 240 310

THE WEEKEND REVIEW
FAX: 0171 293 290

Colours of India
TRANS INDUS

FREE SURANCE

DELUXE OR HOME HIRE

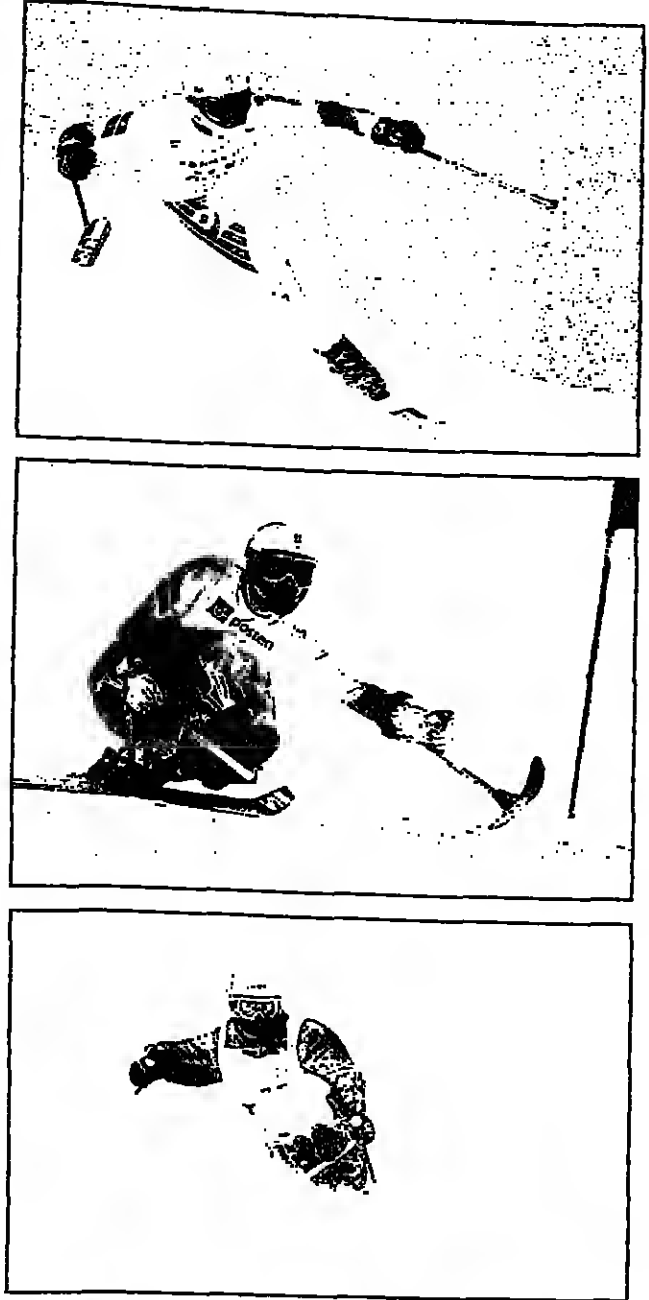
60 61 41 62

ATTO

for a unique
of real holidays
e fully-bonded.
lexible and
tely original -
ok ATTO!

FREE copy of the
every listing all member
phone telephone
1 607 9080

صحننا من الامل



Showing us how it's done: paralympic athletes, clockwise from main picture, Alain Margarete, Jonathan Morris, Brian Harding and Steve Shaw

Ian Martin

Freedom of the slopes

If you see someone zooming down the piste on what looks like a chair on skis, don't be alarmed. It's just one of the many 'adaptive' skiers enjoying themselves. By Stephen Wood

Just after Christmas, I met Karen Darke at the apartment in which she was staying at Avoriaz, in the Portes du Soleil ski area. It was late afternoon, and the place seemed to be full of large Scottish men washing, cooking and making phone calls. (Maybe it was just that they were moving around a lot - she told me later that there were only three of them, and that two weren't Scottish.) But despite the cramped conditions, she was enjoying herself.

"I've had a few nightmare experiences in the Alps," she said. "I've stayed in places that had lots of steps and narrow doors, where I've had to drag myself around on wet slushy floors. It's great to be in accommodation like this."

Darke broke her back in a climbing accident in 1993, and was paralysed from the chest down. Having skied for just a couple of days before the accident, she took it up seriously afterwards because it was the best way of getting around in the mountains.

The reason she chose Avoriaz for this, her seventh skiing trip, was that it is one of the three Alpine resorts featured in a new adaptive-skiing programme for skiers with physical disabilities. The holidays are organised by the tour operator Erna Low in conjunction with the retailer Snow+Rock, which provides specialised ski equipment. In most cases, the apparatus used is a sit-ski: a sort of bucket seat mounted on one or two skis, which the skier steers with the help of short poles fitted with skids at the bottom.

Erna Low - which has been selling skiing holidays for 67 years - launched the programme as a result of hiring Jon Lind as a sales executive for the 1997/8 season. Lind, a 29-year-old Londoner, had been a ski rep and instructor for several years when a cousin invited him to join a group of skiers she was taking to Switzerland for the Back-Up Trust, which organises sports activities for people with spinal cord injuries.

After teaching able-bodied holiday-makers, Lind found it 'exciting to be with people who were so motivated; they weren't holidaying but facing a challenge, and getting satisfaction from their achievements'.

The experience led him to set up a company with a friend who had suffered a spinal injury. It organised adrenaline sports trips for people with physical disabilities. But New Trax, as the company was called, was under-financed; and, says Lind, "after two years it became obvious that it couldn't survive". So he

After teaching able-bodied holiday-makers, Lind found it 'exciting to be with people who were so motivated; they weren't holidaying but facing a challenge, and getting satisfaction from their achievements'

went back to working as a ski rep, and then spent several months on the dole before applying for the sales job at Erna Low.

His interest in adaptive skiing (the term avoids the stigma of "disability", and refers to the specially adapted equipment) came up in the interview - and afterwards, when he started work. Erna Low's managing director, Joanna Yellowlees-Bound, says that "Jon is very passionate about the whole thing, and I'm the sort of person who gets enthusiastic very easily". Soon, they were discussing an adaptive skiing programme. "A small company like ours can be very flexible," says Yellowlees-Bound, "so if someone comes up with a good idea that's not too expensive, we can pursue it. Also, the programme could be linked to resorts with which we already worked."

The three resorts in the Erna Low adaptive skiing brochure, Avoriaz, La Plagne and Tignes, all have schools for disabled skiers. This means not only that specialist tuition is available, but also that the lift staff, for example, are familiar with the sit-ski.

That gave the programme a start; still, there were innumerable problems to be solved both in the resorts - wheelchair access to ski-in, ski-out apartments (and, particularly, to their bathrooms, which require widened doorways), insurance, ski-lifts - and on the journey to and

from Britain. Lind had to plot a complex route through Geneva airport, which is something of an obstacle course for wheelchair users, and to take into account the fact that not all Eurostar trains stop at platforms adjacent to the station concourse.

Problems such as these are of special importance to the programme because, exceptionally, it is aimed at disabled skiers who want to travel independently. Back-Up and other organisations take groups of disabled people to resorts; but for those who - like Karen Darke - want to go skiing with their friends, Erna Low provides a unique service, at no extra cost.

Indeed the adaptive skiing "brochure" is hardly that; it offers specialist information but all clients - whether disabled or not - book through the company's standard French Alps brochure,

at the same price (although each adaptive skier and one helper get a 50 per cent discount on ski-lift passes from the resorts).

For adaptive skiers going to Avoriaz, there is an added incentive: this season Erna Low employed as its resort rep a friend of Lind's, Andrew Moore, an experienced adaptive-ski instructor who is himself a wheelchair user.

"This basic job is to check reservations, receive clients and sort out their problems," says Lind. "But for the new programme it's essential that things go smoothly and safely."

"So I wanted Andrew to go through a security brief with the adaptive skiers, talking them through the lifts and so on. Some of them may not speak a word of French, and they need to know what to say, for example, when they are disembarking from a lift. That's a basic safety requirement."

(Unfortunately, Moore injured his shoulder and has had to return to Britain for physiotherapy; but he will be back in Avoriaz for the programme's busiest period, when the majority of this season's 26 adaptive-skiing clients will be holidaying in the Alps.)

Organising the programme is highly labour-intensive: Lind is busy with his sales job during the day and works on the adaptive skiing programme ("It takes a lot of time, a lot of letters") in the evenings and at weekends. Yellowlees-Bound says of the programme that she has "no hopes for it commercially. I will be pleased if, after the first few years, it doesn't make a loss. But after 15 years selling holidays, it's nice to put something back into skiing."

I spoke to Karen Darke again last week. She is a 29-year-old who works as a geologist in Aberdeen. How, I asked, did she look back on the trip? It was "a real pleasure", she said, "to be so independent".

For details of the adaptive skiing programme, contact Jon Lind on 0171-554 2841.

SAIL ONTO THE BEST SNOW.



The best way to escape the crowded slopes and package hordes is by ferry with Ski-Drive, an exciting idea from P&O Stena Line. A Ski-Drive package includes a return ferry fare for a car, plus AA 4 Star Breakdown Assistance and Home and Overseas Personal Winter Sports Cover from just £159* for two people. Ski-Drive offers the serious skier the flexibility to ski and leave the crowds behind.

To find out more, or to book, see your local travel agent or call 0990 980 980.

P&O Stena LINE

where time sails by

It's never too late to learn

Have the joys of skiing passed you by for ever? Roger Mills says it ain't necessarily so

SKIING USED to seem to me a bit like playing a musical instrument. If you wanted to do it you had to start young. Having reached the second half of my thirties without having got going, it never occurred to me to think about trying. Then, at the ripe old age of 38, I married someone who could ski rather well, and a year later I was heading for Passo Rolle, a small resort in the Italian Dolomites.

I had heard that ski resorts were full of distressingly able five-year-olds and, even though there was a handful of other anxious-looking oldie beginners on the slopes, sharing the discomfort didn't seem likely to make the self-consciousness any easier. But within half an hour, the problems of staying upright were taking up all the mental capacity I had available. What I wasn't expecting was



Skiing lessons aren't just for children Adrian Myers

how fundamentally unnatural the physical experience of skiing would seem at first. Take turning corners. Like most people, my feelings about cornering were based on being on the bicycle, where, if you lean to the left, you go to the left. Nothing so simple for the ski world. On skis, when you lean to the left you go to the right.

Then there is the question of what to do on a steep slope. Faced with a slope, my instinct was to lean back. But if you lean away from the slope when you are on skis, your legs shoot from under you. Making yourself lean forward is the trick, instantly producing a sense of stability. But try getting your body to do that on day one.

"Adults think too much," says Fiona Coats, an instructor who runs one of the ski schools at Aviemore. "Teaching children is easy because they just copy what you do without really realising it. With older people you can see them concentrating too hard, trying to grasp the technique intellectually."

Chilling out is all very well, but skiing, at the very beginning, can be quite alarming. The abiding image I have of my first day is of standing at the top of the nursery slope feeling both distinctly uneasy and that I was rather pathetic to be feeling distinctly uneasy.

So when, exactly, does the fun start? It didn't take long to acquire a degree of competence. Unless you are critically lacking in co-ordination, almost anyone, however old, is getting down the nursery slopes com-

fortably after four or five days. Another week and you're weaving past stricken beginners and wondering if it's time you went back to the hire shop to get your equipment upgraded. "Getting fit before you start helps enormously," says Fiona Coats. "Many people come here having done no exercise at all, thinking that skiing is just effortlessly gliding downhill."

Coats recommends running, cycling or any exercise that gets the legs moving. Another, personal tip, is going for one-to-one tuition in the early days. It may be more expensive but it will have you on your feet (and staying on them) much sooner.

If you are wondering how many years you'll get out of it if you start at 40, remember that in their downhill racing competitions, the Norwegians have an over-80s category.

SNOW REPORTS in association with WorldCover Direct

SKI HOTLINE

Detailed independent snow and weather reports from 180 resorts

First, obtain the access code for the resort of your choice.
Phone or FAX 0906 51 00 843
 (the fax lists codes for 180 resorts)

To listen to the latest snow and weather report:
Phone 0901 47 70 051 + code

For a fax copy of the latest snow and weather report:
Fax 0906 51 00 856 + code

SKI HOTLINE SNAPSHOT

A detailed four-page summary of conditions in 180 resorts
Fax 0906 55 00 601

Helpline: **0870 51 33 345**

Resort	Area open	Comment	Slopes (cm)	Up	Down	Temp	Forecast
ANDORRA							
Arinsal	100%	Upper runs best	100	130	28.01	-2C	Unsettled
AUSTRIA							
Bad Gastein	98%	Fresh powder	40	90	28.01	-7C	Unsettled
Kirchberg	90%	Much improved	20	90	28.01	-5C	Unsettled
CANADA							
Lake Louise	100%	Fresh powder	65	215	27.01	-3C	Some sun
FRANCE							
Chamonix	16%	Powder snow	80	230	28.01	-5C	Unsettled
Meribel	78%	Excellent	80	160	29.01	-5C	Clearing
ITALY							
Cervinia	90%	Good skiing	30	120	27.01	-6C	Light snow
NORWAY							
Gelø	100%	Good snow cover	70	70	17.01	-2C	Overcast
SCOTLAND							
Glencoe	90%	Good skiing	30	40	26.01	-2C	Milder
SWITZERLAND							
Klosters	75%	It's snowing!	60	180	29.01	-7C	Lt snow
UNITED STATES							
Beaver Creek	75%	Fresh snow	85	145	27.01	-7C	Some snow

Information supplied by Ski Hotline

Information supplied by Ski Hotline

Helpline: 0870 51 33 345

Calls to 0901 cost 60p per min, 0906 cost £1 per min, 0870 calls are standard national rates.

On or off piste, with WorldCover you're covered.

0800 365 121
ONE CALL AND YOU'RE COVERED
The report ad

TEL: 0171 293 2222

UK

UK Travel

ONLY EXHIBIT

THE WIDEST CHOICE OF HOLIDAY COTTAGES

It's the only brochure you need
08700 725 725
Country Code 01234

LODGES & HOLIDAY PARKS

Your perfect choice
Lodges in quiet
locations to park
unwind - or Park
with plenty to do.
Free brochure
Phone 01502 502 603
Doreen Hildreth
HOSEASONS
On-line Holiday Homes,
Days, Weeks, Months,
Self-catering, 24 hrs

SYKES
COTTAGES

Superb holiday cottages in
The Yorkshire Dales & Moors,
Northumbria, Cumbria, The Peak District,
North Wales and Devon.

U.K. & EMERALD COTTAGE HOLIDAYS

NEW 1999 BROCHURE - OUT NOW
Scot., Northumbria, Lakes,
Dorset, Devon, Wales, East Anglia,
Kent, Sussex, Cornwall, Dorset,
Somerset, Devon, Cornwall -
Ireland prices less than UK
even including ferry!!
01756 702225

English Country Cottages

An unrivalled choice throughout
Cornwall. Free +1 page
colour brochure
Please call
0870 565 1111
Quora, 54125
(24 hrs)

Cottages, Lodges & Holiday Parks

BLAKES
Holidays in Britain

Call now for your FREE brochure
08700 70 80 99
Brochure only 12p

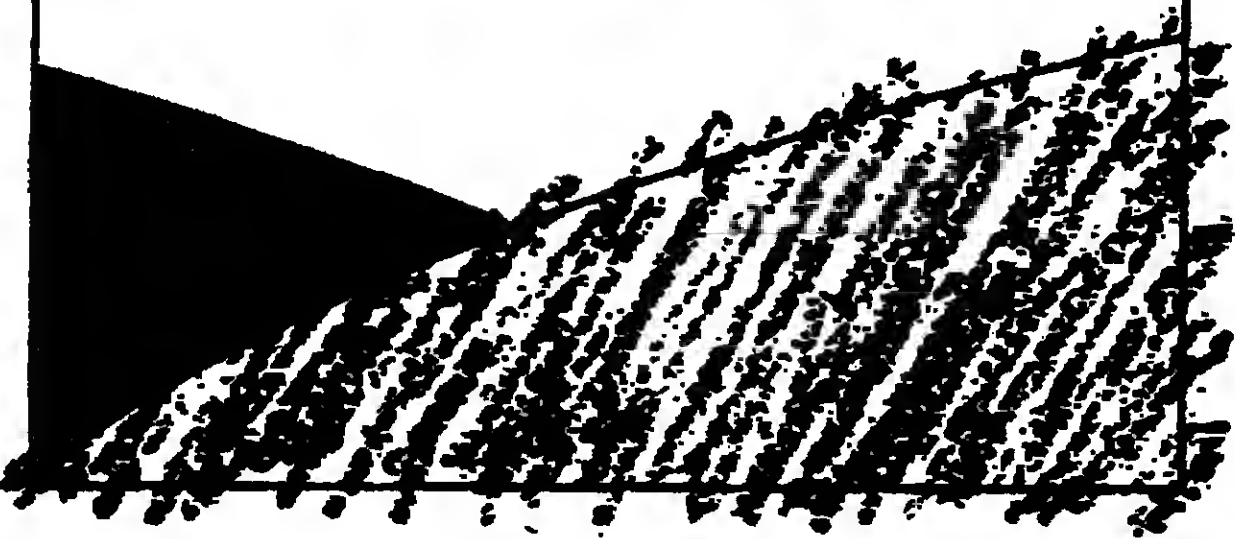
SHIRLEY
England & Wales
Over 4,500 independent
COTTAGES
Book direct with owners
0171 356026
Free brochure

Bullies and Blockers: Back Off!

The Ramblers' Association is preparing to take legal action against Mr Van Hoogstraten, a Sussex landowner who is illegally blocking a public footpath.

Mr Van Hoogstraten is not above the law. Public paths mean just that - open to the public. The Ramblers defend public paths and if all else fails will take legal action to open them up.

The Ramblers



Working for walkers

1-5 Wandsworth Road, London SW8 2XX.
Tel: 0171 339 8500 Registered Charity No.306089

Join our
campaign to
open up paths
right across the
country.

Mr/Ms/Miss/Ms
Address
Postcode Date of birth
Tick box for membership type required
☐ Ordinary £18 ☐ Reduced* £9
☐ Family/joint £22.50 ☐ Joint reduced* £11.50
(Joint is for two adults at same address) *Under 18s/students/retired/disabled/unwaged
Donation £ _____ I enclose £ _____ IND3

Self Catering UK

HOSEASONS
COUNTRY
COTTAGES

WITH
thatch
BY A
meadow
NEAR AN
INN

...with heated swimming
pools, games rooms...and
much more. Coastal and
countryside. Britain's best.
Free colour brochure.

Phone 01502 502 603
01502 502 604

On-line (Home) Catalogue
Dept. C480, Lissington, Notts. NG16 2JH

Welcome
WELCOME HOLIDAYS

SUMMER '99
BROCHURE OUT NOW
West Country, Dorset, Cornwall,
North Wales, Pembrokeshire,
Lakes, Northumbria, Scotland
IRELAND in 1999
01756 702200

S.W. SCOTLAND. Pretty stone
cottage in peaceful countryside
in Dumfriesshire. Dumfrieshire.
Slips 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, 32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 44, 46, 48, 50, 52, 54, 56, 58, 60, 62, 64, 66, 68, 70, 72, 74, 76, 78, 80, 82, 84, 86, 88, 90, 92, 94, 96, 98, 100, 102, 104, 106, 108, 110, 112, 114, 116, 118, 120, 122, 124, 126, 128, 130, 132, 134, 136, 138, 140, 142, 144, 146, 148, 150, 152, 154, 156, 158, 160, 162, 164, 166, 168, 170, 172, 174, 176, 178, 180, 182, 184, 186, 188, 190, 192, 194, 196, 198, 200, 202, 204, 206, 208, 210, 212, 214, 216, 218, 220, 222, 224, 226, 228, 230, 232, 234, 236, 238, 240, 242, 244, 246, 248, 250, 252, 254, 256, 258, 260, 262, 264, 266, 268, 270, 272, 274, 276, 278, 280, 282, 284, 286, 288, 290, 292, 294, 296, 298, 300, 302, 304, 306, 308, 310, 312, 314, 316, 318, 320, 322, 324, 326, 328, 330, 332, 334, 336, 338, 340, 342, 344, 346, 348, 350, 352, 354, 356, 358, 360, 362, 364, 366, 368, 370, 372, 374, 376, 378, 380, 382, 384, 386, 388, 390, 392, 394, 396, 398, 400, 402, 404, 406, 408, 410, 412, 414, 416, 418, 420, 422, 424, 426, 428, 430, 432, 434, 436, 438, 440, 442, 444, 446, 448, 450, 452, 454, 456, 458, 460, 462, 464, 466, 468, 470, 472, 474, 476, 478, 480, 482, 484, 486, 488, 490, 492, 494, 496, 498, 500, 502, 504, 506, 508, 510, 512, 514, 516, 518, 520, 522, 524, 526, 528, 530, 532, 534, 536, 538, 540, 542, 544, 546, 548, 550, 552, 554, 556, 558, 560, 562, 564, 566, 568, 570, 572, 574, 576, 578, 580, 582, 584, 586, 588, 590, 592, 594, 596, 598, 600, 602, 604, 606, 608, 610, 612, 614, 616, 618, 620, 622, 624, 626, 628, 630, 632, 634, 636, 638, 640, 642, 644, 646, 648, 650, 652, 654, 656, 658, 660, 662, 664, 666, 668, 670, 672, 674, 676, 678, 680, 682, 684, 686, 688, 690, 692, 694, 696, 698, 700, 702, 704, 706, 708, 710, 712, 714, 716, 718, 720, 722, 724, 726, 728, 730, 732, 734, 736, 738, 740, 742, 744, 746, 748, 750, 752, 754, 756, 758, 760, 762, 764, 766, 768, 770, 772, 774, 776, 778, 780, 782, 784, 786, 788, 790, 792, 794, 796, 798, 800, 802, 804, 806, 808, 810, 812, 814, 816, 818, 820, 822, 824, 826, 828, 830, 832, 834, 836, 838, 840, 842, 844, 846, 848, 850, 852, 854, 856, 858, 860, 862, 864, 866, 868, 870, 872, 874, 876, 878, 880, 882, 884, 886, 888, 890, 892, 894, 896, 898, 900, 902, 904, 906, 908, 910, 912, 914, 916, 918, 920, 922, 924, 926, 928, 930, 932, 934, 936, 938, 940, 942, 944, 946, 948, 950, 952, 954, 956, 958, 960, 962, 964, 966, 968, 970, 972, 974, 976, 978, 980, 982, 984, 986, 988, 990, 992, 994, 996, 998, 1000, 1002, 1004, 1006, 1008, 1010, 1012, 1014, 1016, 1018, 1020, 1022, 1024, 1026, 1028, 1030, 1032, 1034, 1036, 1038, 1040, 1042, 1044, 1046, 1048, 1050, 1052, 1054, 1056, 1058, 1060, 1062, 1064, 1066, 1068, 1070, 1072, 1074, 1076, 1078, 1080, 1082, 1084, 1086, 1088, 1090, 1092, 1094, 1096, 1098, 1100, 1102, 1104, 1106, 1108, 1110, 1112, 1114, 1116, 1118, 1120, 1122, 1124, 1126, 1128, 1130, 1132, 1134, 1136, 1138, 1140, 1142, 1144, 1146, 1148, 1150, 1152, 1154, 1156, 1158, 1160, 1162, 1164, 1166, 1168, 1170, 1172, 1174, 1176, 1178, 1180, 1182, 1184, 1186, 1188, 1190, 1192, 1194, 1196, 1198, 1200, 1202, 1204, 1206, 1208, 1210, 1212, 1214, 1216, 1218, 1220, 1222, 1224, 1226, 1228, 1230, 1232, 1234, 1236, 1238, 1240, 1242, 1244, 1246, 1248, 1250, 1252, 1254, 1256, 1258, 1260, 1262, 1264, 1266, 1268, 1270, 1272, 1274, 1276, 1278, 1280, 1282, 1284, 1286, 1288, 1290, 1292, 1294, 1296, 1298, 1300, 1302, 1304, 1306, 1308, 1310, 1312, 1314, 1316, 1318, 1320, 1322, 1324, 1326, 1328, 1330, 1332, 1334, 1336, 1338, 1340, 1342, 1344, 1346, 1348, 1350, 1352, 1354, 1356, 1358, 1360, 1362, 1364, 1366, 1368, 1370, 1372, 1374, 1376, 1378, 1380, 1382, 1384, 1386, 1388, 1390, 1392, 1394, 1396, 1398, 1400, 1402, 1404, 1406, 1408, 1410, 1412, 1414, 1416, 1418, 1420, 1422, 1424, 1426, 1428, 1430, 1432, 1434, 1436, 1438, 1440, 1442, 1444, 1446, 1448, 1450, 1452, 1454, 1456, 1458, 1460, 1462, 1464, 1466, 1468, 1470, 1472, 1474, 1476, 1478, 1480, 1482, 1484, 1486, 1488, 1490, 1492, 1494, 1496, 1498, 1500, 1502, 1504, 1506, 1508, 1510, 1512, 1514, 1516, 1518, 1520, 1522, 1524, 1526, 1528, 1530, 1532, 1534, 1536, 1538, 1540, 1542, 1544, 1546, 1548, 1550, 1552, 1554, 1556, 1558, 1560, 1562, 1564, 1566, 1568, 1570, 1572, 1574, 1576, 1578, 1580, 1582, 1584, 1586, 1588, 1590, 1592, 1594, 1596, 1598, 1600, 1602, 1604, 1606, 1608, 1610, 1612, 1614, 1616, 1618, 1620, 1622, 1624, 1626, 1628, 1630, 1632, 1634, 1636, 1638, 1640, 1642, 1644, 1646, 1648, 1650, 1652, 1654, 1656, 1658, 1660, 1662, 1664, 1666, 1668, 1670, 1672, 1674, 1676, 1678, 1680, 1682, 1684, 1686, 1688, 1690, 1692, 1694, 1696, 1698, 1700, 1702, 1704, 1706, 1708, 1710, 1712, 1714, 1716, 1718, 1720, 1722, 1724, 1726, 1728, 1730, 1732, 1734, 1736, 1738, 1740, 1742, 1744, 1746, 1748, 1750, 1752, 1754, 1756, 1758, 1760, 1762, 1764, 1766, 1768, 1770, 1772, 1774, 1776, 1778, 1780, 1782, 1784, 1786, 1788, 1790, 1792, 1794, 1796, 1798, 1800, 1802, 1804, 1806, 1808, 1810, 1812, 1814, 1816, 1818, 1820, 1822, 1824, 1826, 1828, 1830, 1832, 1834, 1836, 1838, 1840, 1842, 1844, 1846, 1848, 1850, 1852, 1854, 1856, 1858, 1860, 1862, 1864, 1866, 1868, 1870, 1872, 1874, 1876, 1878, 1880, 1882, 1884, 1886, 1888, 1890, 1892, 1894, 1896, 1898, 1900, 1902, 1904, 1906, 1908, 1910, 1912, 1914, 1916, 1918, 1920, 1922, 1924, 1926, 1928, 1930, 1932, 1934, 1936, 1938, 1940, 1942, 1944, 1946, 1948, 1950, 1952, 1954, 1956, 1958, 1960, 1962, 1964, 1966, 1968, 1970, 1972, 1974, 1976, 1978, 1980, 1982, 1984, 1986, 1988, 1990, 1992, 1994, 1996, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018, 2020, 2022, 2024, 2026, 2028, 2030, 2032, 2034, 2036, 2038, 2040, 2042, 2044, 2046, 2048, 2050, 2052, 2054, 2056, 2058, 2060, 2062, 2064, 2066, 2068, 2070, 2072, 2074, 2076, 2078, 2080, 2082, 2084, 2086, 2088, 2090, 2092, 2094, 2096, 2098, 2100, 2102, 2104, 2106, 2108, 2110, 2112, 2114, 2116, 2118, 2120, 2122, 2124, 2126, 2128, 2130, 2132, 2134, 2136, 2138, 2140, 2142, 2144, 2146, 2148, 2150, 2152, 2154, 2156, 2158, 2160, 2162, 2164, 2166, 2168, 2170, 2172, 2174, 2176, 2178, 2180, 2182, 2184, 2186, 2188, 2190, 2192, 2194, 2196, 2198, 2200, 2202, 2204, 2206, 2208, 2210, 2212, 2214, 2216, 2218, 2220, 2222, 2224, 2226, 2228, 2230, 2232, 2234, 2236, 2238, 2240, 2242, 2244, 2246, 2248, 2250, 2252, 2254, 2256, 2258, 2260, 2262, 2264, 2266, 2268, 2270, 2272, 2274, 2276, 2278, 2280, 2282, 2284, 2286, 2288, 2290, 2292, 2294, 2296, 2298, 2300, 2302, 2304, 2306, 2308, 2310, 2312, 2314, 2316, 2318, 2320, 2322, 2324, 2326, 2328, 2330, 2332, 2334, 2336, 2338, 2340, 2342, 2344, 2346, 2348, 2350, 2352, 2354, 2356, 2358, 2360, 2362, 2364, 2366, 2368, 2370, 2372, 2374, 2376, 2378, 2380, 2382, 2384, 2386, 2388, 2390, 2392, 2394, 2396, 2398, 2400, 2402, 2404, 2406, 2408, 2410, 2412, 2414, 2416, 2418, 2420, 2422, 2424, 2426, 2428, 2430, 2432, 2434, 2436, 2438, 2440, 2442, 2444, 2446, 2448, 2450, 2452, 2454, 2456, 2458, 2460, 2462, 2464, 2466, 2468, 2470, 2472, 2474, 2476, 2478, 2480, 2482, 2484, 2486, 2488, 2490, 2492, 2494, 2496, 2498, 2500, 2502, 2504, 2506, 2508, 2510, 2512, 2514, 2516, 2518, 2520, 2522, 2524, 2526, 2528, 2530, 2532, 2534, 2536, 2538, 2540, 2542, 2544, 2546, 2548, 2550, 2552, 2554, 2556, 2558, 2560, 2562, 2564, 2566, 2568, 2570, 2572, 2574, 2576, 2578, 2580, 2582, 2584, 2586, 2588, 2590, 2592, 2594, 2596, 2598, 2600, 2602, 2604, 2606, 2608, 2610, 2612, 2614, 2616, 2618, 2620, 2622, 2624, 2626, 2628, 2630, 2632, 2634, 2636, 2638, 2640, 2642, 2644, 2646, 2648, 2650, 2652, 2654, 2656, 2658, 2660, 2662, 2664, 2666, 2668, 2670, 2672, 2674, 2676, 2678, 2680, 2682, 2684, 2686, 2688, 2690, 2692, 2694, 2696, 2698, 2700, 2702, 2704, 2706, 2708, 2710, 2712, 2714, 2716, 2718, 2720, 2722, 2724, 2726, 2728, 2730, 2732, 2734, 2736, 2738, 2740, 2742, 2744, 2746, 2748, 2750, 2752, 2754, 2756, 2758, 2760, 2762, 2764, 2766, 2768, 2770, 2772, 2774, 2776, 2778, 2780, 2782, 2784, 2786, 2788, 2790, 2792, 2794, 2796, 2798, 2800, 2802, 2804, 2806, 2808, 2810, 2812, 2814, 2816, 2818, 2820, 2822, 2824, 2826, 2828, 2830, 2832, 2834, 2836, 2838, 2840, 2842, 2844, 2846, 2848, 2850, 2852, 2854, 2856, 2858, 2860, 2862, 2864, 2866, 2868, 2870, 2872, 2874, 2876, 2878, 2880, 2882, 2884, 2886, 2888, 2890, 2892, 2894, 2896, 2898, 2900, 2902, 2904, 2906, 2908, 2910, 2912, 2914, 2916, 2918, 2920, 2922, 2924, 2926, 2928, 2930, 2932, 2934, 2936, 2938, 2940, 2942, 2944, 2946, 2948, 2950, 2952, 2954, 2956, 2958, 2960, 2962, 2964, 2966, 2968, 2970, 2972, 2974, 2976, 2978, 2980, 2982, 2984, 2986, 2988, 2990, 2992, 2994, 2996, 2998, 3000, 3002, 3004, 3006, 3008, 3010, 3012, 3014, 3016, 3018, 3020, 3022, 3024, 3026, 3028, 3030, 3032, 3034, 3036, 3038, 3040, 3042, 3044, 3046, 3048, 3050, 3052, 3054, 3056, 3058, 3060, 3062, 3064, 3066, 3068, 3070, 3072, 3074, 3076, 3078, 3080, 3082, 3084, 3086, 3088, 3090, 3092, 3094, 3096, 3098, 3100, 3102, 3104, 3106, 3108, 3110, 3112, 3114, 3116, 3118, 3120, 3122, 3124, 3126, 3128, 3130, 3132, 3134, 3136, 3138, 3140, 3142, 3144, 3146, 3148, 3150, 3152, 3154, 3156, 3158, 3160, 3162, 3164, 3166, 3168, 3170, 3172, 3174, 3176, 3178, 3180, 3182, 3184, 3186, 3188, 3190, 3192, 3194, 3196, 3198, 3200, 3202, 3204, 3206, 3208, 3210, 3212, 3214, 3216, 3218, 3220, 3222, 3224, 3226, 3228, 3230, 3232, 3234, 3236, 3238, 3240, 3242, 3244, 3246, 3248, 3250, 3252, 3254, 3256, 3258, 3260, 3262, 3264, 3266, 3268, 3270, 3272, 3274, 3276, 3278, 3280, 3282, 3284, 3286, 3288, 3290, 3292, 3294, 3296, 3298, 3300, 3302, 3304, 3306, 3308, 3310, 3312, 3314, 3316, 3318, 3320, 3322, 3324, 3326, 3328, 3330, 3332, 3334, 3336, 3338, 3340, 3342, 3344, 3346, 3348, 3350, 3352, 3354, 3356, 3358, 3360, 3362, 3364, 3366, 3368, 3370, 3372, 3374, 3376, 3378, 3380, 3382, 3384, 3386, 3388, 3390, 3392, 3394, 3396, 3398, 3400, 3402, 3404, 3406, 3408, 3410, 3412, 3414, 3416, 3418, 3420, 3422, 3424, 3426, 3428, 3430, 3432, 3434, 3436, 3438, 3440, 3442, 3444, 3446, 3448, 3450, 3452, 3454, 3456, 3458, 3460, 3462, 3464, 3466, 3468, 3470, 3472, 3474, 3476, 3478, 3480, 3482, 3484, 3486, 3488, 3490, 3492, 3494, 3496, 3498, 3500, 3502, 3504, 3506, 3508, 3510, 3512, 3514, 3516, 3518, 3520, 3522, 3524, 3526, 3528, 3530, 3532, 3534, 3536, 3538, 3540, 3542, 3544, 3546, 3548, 3550, 3552, 3554, 3556, 3558, 3560, 3562, 3564, 3566, 3568, 3570, 3572, 3574, 3576, 3578, 3580, 3582, 3584, 3586, 3588, 3590, 3592, 3594, 3596, 3598, 3600, 3602, 3604, 3606, 3608, 3610, 3612, 3614, 3616, 3618, 3620, 3622, 3624, 3626, 3628, 3630, 3632, 3634, 3636, 3638, 3640, 3642, 3644, 3646, 3648, 3650, 3652, 3654, 3656, 3658, 3660, 3662, 3664, 3666, 3668, 3670, 3672, 3674, 3676, 3678, 3680, 3682, 3684, 3686,

Fresh but definitely not flirty

A brief visit to
Christchurch will
uncover this
Dorset town's
quiet charm. By
Donald Hiscock

Fresh air - that's what Dorset is best for, especially near the coastal town of Christchurch. The idyllic can browse the shops, visit the Red House Museum, take afternoon tea, and have their photographs taken beside the town ducking stool, or in the stocks beneath the castle mound. But for those of us with the legs and lungs for a hearty stroll, it is best to get out of Christchurch itself and on to its watery margins.

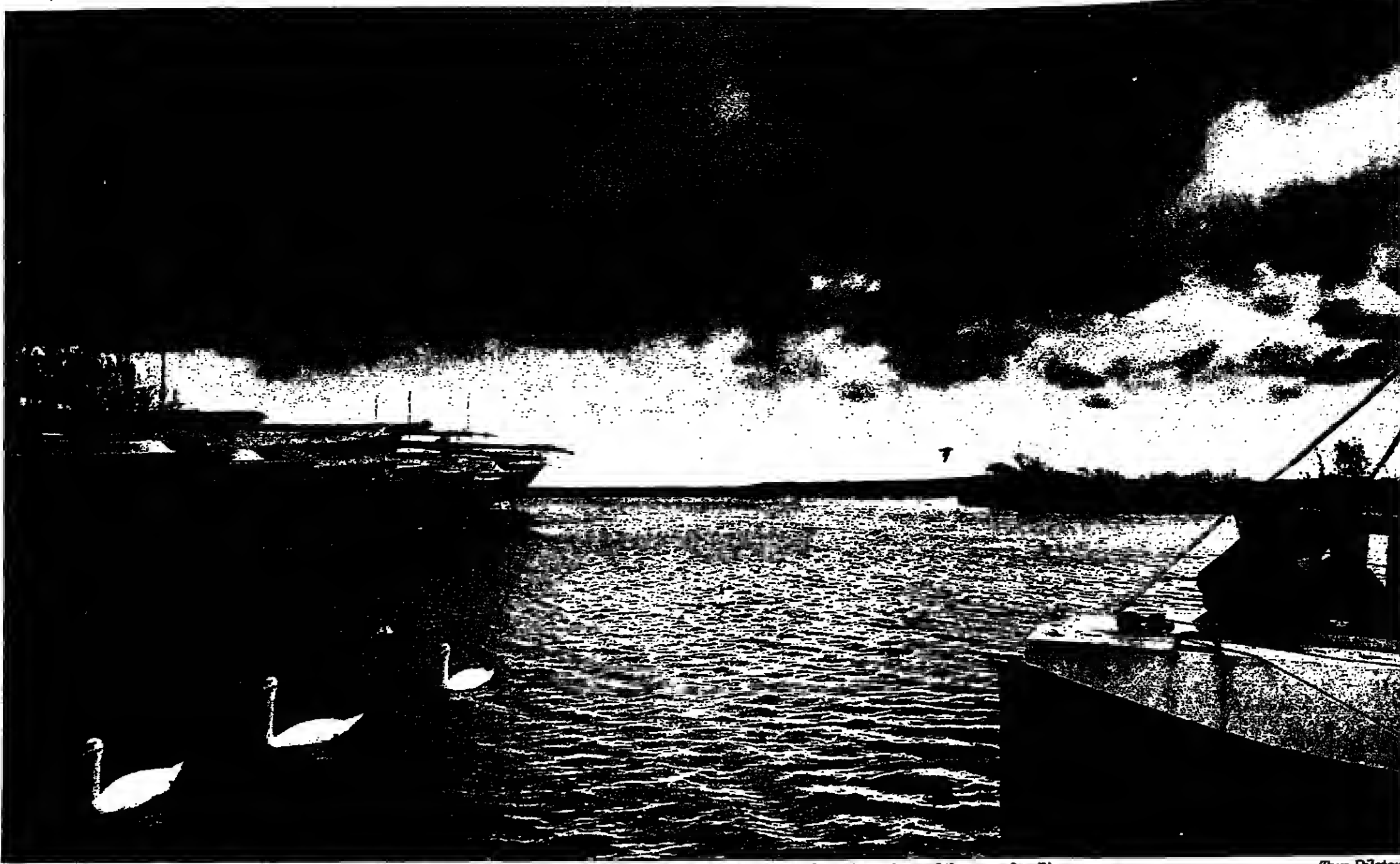
The Dorset town that used to be in Hampshire and used to be called Tynham is now a quiet neighbour of bustling Bournemouth. It sits at the confluence of the Avon and Stour rivers, which flow into a harbour that in turn flows with a fierce current into Christchurch Bay, slap bang opposite The Needles at the westernmost tip of the Isle of Wight, on the other side of the Solent.

Christchurch's beautiful situation is perfect for improving your health. Stand at the quay, fend off the over-familiar swans and decide which way to go around a circuit of the harbour. I favour the anti-clockwise route. Cross over by ferry to the village of Wick on the Bournemouth side of the Stour. From here you can pick up the well-signposted Stour Valley Way out towards Hengistbury Head.

Hengistbury, excavated by archaeologists as a settlement in the Iron and Bronze Ages, is now a nature reserve. The view at the top of this sandy hill is spectacular. Look back along the Dorset coast to the apartment blocks of Bournemouth and beyond to the Isle of Purbeck. Turn right to look down on Christchurch harbour and how it is almost closed up, pincer-like, by the spit of land that pushes out of the end of the Head.

The shallow harbour is ideal for novice sailors, sailboarders and potterers in small craft. The view of the 900-year-old Priory Church which gives the town its name is only spoiled by a development of marine houses, all white wood and showy atriums, at the feet of the handsome Norman and Perpendicular grey mass of the priory.

The church is worth a visit when you get back to the town. It has the feel of a small cathedral inside and houses some curious attractions, such as the Miraculous Beam and the Loft Museum. This is not, as my son was disappointed to learn, a museum about lofts, but a room over the lady chapel that used to be a school for novice monks; it now holds information about the Priory. The same son was also disap-



Christchurch's shallow harbour - ideal for novice sailors, sailboarders and potterers in small craft, as long as they steer clear of the over-familiar swans

Tom Pilston

pointed to learn that he wasn't allowed to climb the 176 steps to the top of the tower. "You have to be over 10," I told him. He went off instead and performed aerial tricks with his Yo-Yo frighteningly close to some delicate medieval carvings.

When you come down the path off

Hengistbury Head, approaching the entrance to the harbour and roughly at the half-way point in the walk, you set foot on a narrow spit of beach. A huddle of huts occupies the sand, some facing in towards Christchurch and others looking out at The Needles. Adorned with beach huts

may like to know that these are in the de luxe category: they sleep families and have kitchens. With some pretension you could refer to them as "chalets". I am told by one of their owners that they change hands for more than £25,000 each. There's a little community out

here on this narrow strip of sand. A land train, the Noddy Train, not only provides pleasure rides for summer visitors, but operates all year to transport hut dwellers back to the car park on the Bournemouth side of the harbour. Given the right weather, after a day on the sand I

would rate this as one of my great train journeys of the world. To get across the harbour entrance you have to take a ferry from opposite the beach café. To complete the anti-clockwise circuit go over the short distance to Haven Quay at Mudeford, where you can

buy fresh seafood and have a drink at the pub. However, a direct return to Christchurch by ferry can be made from the same jetty. Take a leisurely putter back in a wooden motor launch to the priory, looking out for heron and other birds feeding in the reeds of the river Stour.

Crossing to Haven Quay means that you get to walk more through residential streets in Mudeford than through marshland. But it is worth going out on to Stampit Marsh, another nature reserve. From here you have a fair trudge back into Christchurch, but there are several good pubs for food along the way.

With small children, the boat journey back up the river is a treat. On a warm weekend the ferry a meanders past waving sailors in all sizes of craft. Drift past the priory stop and alight at the end of the route at Tuckton Tea Gardens. During the summer (which officially begins hereabouts at Easter) you can sit back next to a putting green in a restful, old-fashioned, typically English kind of riverside setting.

Christchurch tourist information: 01202 471780

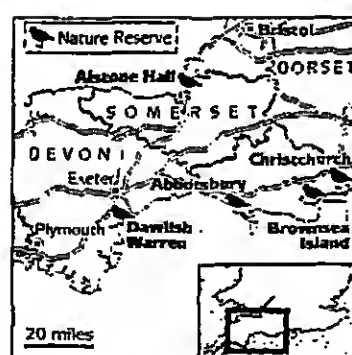
MORE ESCAPES: NATURE RESERVES IN THE SOUTH-WEST

1. St Catherine's Hill North Christchurch, Dorset. 01202 495043
Dorset heathland and pine forestry; rare habitat for sand lizards, smooth snakes, Dartford warblers and nightjars. Magnificent views over the Avon valley (a Site of Special Scientific Interest), the Isle of Wight, Bournemouth and - on a clear day - right up to the Purbeck hills. Daily public access at any time. Entrance free.

2. Dawlish Warren Nature Reserve
Devon. 01626 363980

Sand spit with beach at mouth of river Exe. Large flocks of wading birds best spotted from hides at high tide in winter. Also the only site in Britain sporting the Warren crocus. Reserve open all year daily. Entrance free. Visitor centre open: 28 March-30 September daily, 10.30am-1pm and 2pm-5pm. And from 1 October to 27 March on Saturdays and Sundays 10.30am-1pm and 2pm-5pm.

3. Abbotsbury Swannery
New Barn Road, Abbotsbury, Dorset. 01305 871858
Six-hundred-year-old swannery



billed as a paradise for nature enthusiasts. Visitors can walk among free-flying mute swans or

watch as they hatch, between the end of May until the end of June. Restaurant, gift shop, audio-visual show, shire horse and cart rides. Open 14 March-29 October daily, 10am-6pm.

4. Ailstone Wildlife Park
Ailstone Hall, Highbridge, Somerset. 01278 782405
Hands-on experience of a herd of 20 red deer, a hand-reared Mongolian camel, llamas, emus, kune-kune pigs, rheas and unusual goats. Entrance: £2.75 for adults, £1.75 for children and £2.50 for senior citizens. Open 2 April-31 October daily, 10am-6pm.

5. Brownsea Island
01202 707744
Known as the "getaway place" by locals, this picturesque island is one of the last homes of the rare red squirrel. Wading birds flock to the lagoon and there are 500 acres of woodland walks. Ferries leave every half hour from Poole and Sandbanks and take 20 mins and 10 mins respectively. There is a National Trust entrance fee of £2.50 for adults, £1.30 for children and £6.30 for families. Island open from 27 March-3 October daily, 10am-5pm and in July and August until 6pm.

HUGH RIDDELL

Take a walk on the quintessentially English side

Undulating countryside, Norman churches and views to ancient chalk horses are among the highlights of a Cotswolds winter walk. By David Viner

THE COTSWOLDS are full of clichés: stone is honey-coloured, villages nestle, everything is quintessential. But winter adds a twist to this idyll. And the best way to appreciate this is by walking through the almost impossibly lovely landscape.

This bridleyway walk in a circuit of four villages (and a fifth if you fancy) takes you right into the heart of the Cotswolds. The landscape gently undulates, the views are extensive, and the villages are some of the most attractive in England.

The churches are built almost entirely of local stone, originally Norman but with lots of Perpendicular rebuilding, and another (often less popular) refurbishment in Victorian times. A strong west tower, quiet, village interiors and tidy graveyards complete the picture. And thankfully they are mostly open during the day.

Start in Cold Aston, or Aston Blank if you prefer: the road signs can't make up their minds and give you both. Why Cold? No doubt a reference to Cotswold winters up here at 700ft above sea level.

The church at Cold Aston, like the one in neighbouring Notgrove, has no east window, which makes one wonder why. Before you leave St Andrew's, take the time to find the grave of the Rev James Hughes, vicar of three churches for 27 years, and proud owner of no fewer than 37 cats. Two stand watch over his tombstone.

Go west from the village for a mile. Beyond the last house, divert left into Long Ash Piece, a splendid brake of trees in a double avenue, forming a half-mile-long wind

barrier on the skyline from north and south. And they are mostly beech, another typical Cotswold feature.

Turn right and left at the end and cross the field obliquely (follow bridleyway signs, not footpath signs, throughout this walk) with a lovely view of Notgrove village across the small valley.

At the lane, turn left and follow round to the church of St Bartholomew. Visiting Notgrove, an estate village, gives the feeling of trespassing in somebody's front garden. The church, standing next to the manor-house, is a small gem. Its guide notes call it a "church of precious things" to which the 20th century has contributed. In place of the missing east window is a large tapestry of the village, created over a period of 11 years by the lord of the manor and villagers together.

Walk up the lane, past the drive to the manor and beyond the cricket pitch. At the junction, turn left and almost immediately right into a lane heading westwards.

The view across the dry valley is one of large open fields, scattered barns, clumps of woodland (coverts and brakes) and distant views to the next village on the skyline, an experience that is repeated throughout the walk.

History is often perpetuated in these fields and covert names. Farmers and landowners now dead and gone have their names recorded (Rixon's Covert) or their family remembered (Judith Grove).

Past Kitehill Barn, follow the path down into the valley bottom. Here there is the option of an additional route to take in Salperton - in



Attractive stone churches dot the Cotswolds landscape

BT/ETB

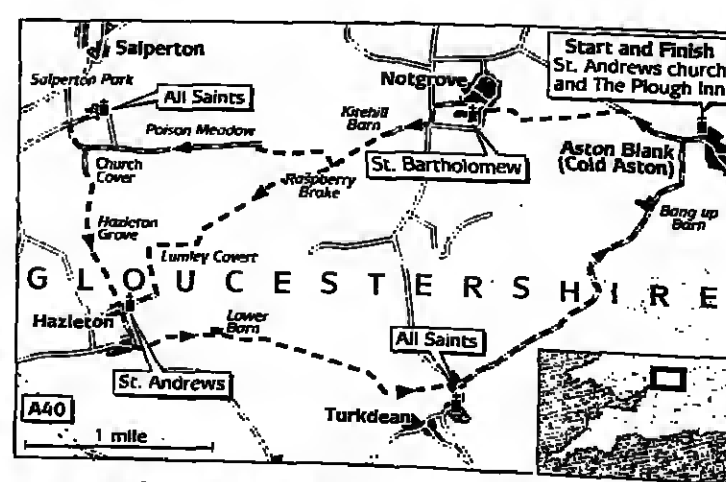
which case turn right through the gate beside the ash tree and then left to walk up the middle of the large field to Farhill Farm. Follow the lane past Poison Meadow, and continue round to join the drive sweeping up to Salperton Park (private, no access). The tiny church of All Saints stands almost in the garden; follow the signs up to it.

Thereafter, retrace your steps into Church Cover and turn right to follow the bridleyway southwards along side Hazleton Grove into Hazleton village, to rejoin the main walk.

Otherwise, go straight over at the bottom and climb the bank along the field boundary past Raspberry Brake. At the bridleyway sign, divert obliquely left across the field to

cross another path at the junction of three large fields on the crest of the hill. The views from here are the best on the walk - on a clear day you can see easily across to the Uffington White Horse on the Ridgeway to the south.

Drop down to the field edge and then down the bank into another dry valley. Turn right here, enjoying



some rare unimproved grassland on the steep field banks opposite Lumley Covert. At the road to the new farmhouse built up the bank, follow round to the left and up the track to enter Hazleton village, and visit St Andrew's church.

The route continues down the lane into the dip. Ignore two turns right and take the left turn, keeping straight on beyond the "unsuitable for motors" sign. Here begins another gentle drop into another valley, the road down to the farm buildings at Lower Barn becoming a stony track into the bottom.

Through the gate, turn right and enjoy for perhaps half a mile the best Cotswold valley of the walk - known locally as the "hidden valley". Up the bank to the gate and thence up to join the road at Manor Farm buildings at Turkdean.

Turn right here and along the village street to the church (another All Saints), set in a large churchyard.

Read the report bravely posted up by an earlier vicar on the obliteration of some of the church's wall paintings in a previous regime.

Retrace your steps back up the village, and at the manor on the corner of the small green, turn right into another "unsuitable" bridleyway for a superb mile-long walk across the fields back to Cold Aston.

On the way, have a smile at Bang Up Barn, once an isolated field barn and cottage. The barn has gone but the rebuilt cottage is now much more sophisticated and offers B&B. At the road once again, turn right into the village.

The walk is about eight miles; add two for the Salperton loop. Cold Aston is one mile off the A429. Park in the village, which has the only pub on the walk, the Plough Inn. Use OS Pathfinder maps 1067 & 1090 and Outdoor Leisure 45: Cotswolds

Islanders who sing with one voice

Maybe it's because they have nothing else to do, but the Faroese are the world's greatest musical magpies. By Cleo Paskal

Sigríð bounds on-stage with messianic glee. She has that sleek-to-the-point-of-underfed, gazelle look common to a generation of post-Celine chanteuses. She briefly basks in the adulation wafting up from the crowd. Then, gesturing towards the choir of 30 or so singers already tiered at the back of the stage, she proudly proclaims: "United Voices is in the House!"

And the crowd goes wild. Woodstock revisited? Well, er, no. A Faroese church choir. If there's one thing the Faroese take more seriously than football, it's music. Give 'em half a chance and they'll start to croon. Give 'em a whole chance and a guitar will appear out of nowhere. There are church choirs, school choirs, men's choirs, town choirs, countless bands and even a full orchestra. All in a country of fewer than 44,000 people.

Some say it is because the main cultural anchor of the Faroese is the Ring Dance, a mesmerising circle dance that dates from the Middle Ages. The dance can last for days and is accompanied by a cappella ballads that spin tales of ancient battles and love.

Once upon a time, much of western Europe danced the Ring Dance, but now the only place where the ghosts of the ballads come back to life is this tiny, windswept outpost in the North Atlantic.

Or maybe they sing so much because there's really not much else to do out here. Whatever the reason, the Faroese sing their hearts out - in any style imaginable, and in every nook and cranny of their absurdly remote islands. They'll sing rock in beer clubs, blues in church, heavy metal in sports halls and just about anything at private parties.

The big annual showcase of home-spun talent is the Faro Islands Jazz, Folk and Blues Festival. All the main currents of Faroese youth culture are represented.

The big excitement this year revolved around United Voices. You see, the Faroese also take their religion very seriously (they have a lot of spare time). Around 25 per cent of the population belongs to one of

the endlessly schismatic fundamentalist Christian sects. And this year, some of the youth representing choirs from differing sects put their religious differences aside to form United Voices. This union was additionally blessed by getting Sigríð, a veritable Faroese mega-star - by virtue of being in a Norwegian girl band - to front it.

A capacity crowd turned out to see the group's inaugural show, an upbeat "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" spectacular. Sigríð's Slinky dress alone put the put the "Ya!" back in "Halleluya!" and played its part in converting at least half of the audience. Think of the blonde girl from Abba doing gospel.

United Voice's last "Let Us Magnify Him, For He's Holy, Holy" had barely faded away when they were replaced on stage by what is unquestionably the best goth-metal-funk band the Faroes ever produced (if only by lack of competition). MC Har is made up of the Bad Boys of Faroese popular music. Both of them. They are surrounded by an anarcho-collective of surprisingly talented musicians and singers that will do things such as play a beautiful trumpet solo in the midst of a thumping ode to sperm.

Ah, youth today. That Faroese knack of taking a standard form of music, from gospel to metal, and tweaking it just so to give it that special North Atlantic feel was superbly demonstrated on the last day of the festival by a local boy, Teitur Lassen.

Teitur, in his early twenties, had made a David Cassidy-esque name for himself as a Faroese teen heart-throb, performing in a rock band called Mark No Limits.

Then he went off to Denmark, and strange things happen there. He re-emerged at the festival as a mature, smoky-voiced jazz singer, conjuring up ghosts of Duke Ellington and Harlem and Satchmo. But, being Faroese, he found that wasn't enough. He had to give it that something extra. So he did a show where he set the words of classic Faroese poems to New York jazz riffs. And it was great.

It may be the Ring Dance, it may be the lack of good television, it may be the endless rounds of multi-

generational house parties, it may even be all the time they spend rearing sheep.

Whatever it is, it has produced a small corner of the world where people have the time and the skill to mix and meld the whole gamut of Western musical tradition, from medieval chants to Metallica. The Faroese can make gospel sexy, metal melodic and jazz even more poetic. And that's just this year's concoctions.

Musical innovation is alive and well and living in the Faroe Islands. Who would have thought it?

It is pretty hard to avoid live music in the Faroe Islands. Organised events such as the Festival usually take place in the summer and autumn. This autumn, Frødur, one of the best-known bands in the Faroes, are to perform the country's first rock opera with the Faroese Symphony Orchestra.

If you can't wait until then, Mark No Limits and another popular Faroese rock band, KJØLAR, both have CDs out. MC Har not only has a CD; they have also set up their own website at www.qqa.dk.



Something in the air is it the sheer beauty of the place, or the lack of good television that makes the Faroese want to sing?

Corbis

THE SUMMER OF 69, HOME COUNTIES STYLE

THE FAROES are 30 years too late; the future of music was sealed in the summer of 1969 - though not at the celebrated Woodstock festival. Instead, southern England was the venue for a noisy revolution. Emily (and 15,000 others) saw Pink Floyd play Plimpton, Dylan took a ferry 'cross the Solent to the Isle of Wight, and the Stones spent the afternoon together in London's Hyde Park with an audience equivalent to three times the population of the Faroes.

In 1999, the children of those dazed hippies in the audience can set the controls for the heart of the Home Counties and retrace the trail of joss sticks and inadequate latrines of that glorious July and August.

Harold Wilson's Labour government assiduously courted the newly enfranchised youth vote. After showering the Beatles with MBEs and starting up Radio 1, the government celebrated

Britpop Mk1 by giving the run of a royal park to the Rolling Stones.

The Stones' Hyde Park gig took place on 5 July, the weekend after one of the first premature deaths of a rock great - their former guitarist, Brian Jones. Mick Jagger quoted Shelley and released thousands of white butterflies in his memory. Then the windows of Apsley House and the Hilton rattled to the band's new hit, "Honky Tonk Woman".

Jones died from the lethal rock combo of drink, drugs and diving into a swimming-pool at his East Sussex farm. Had he lived, he would have needed only to stride down the lane to the summer's next big event, at Plimpton racecourse.

Despite what promoter Barry Moore described as "hassles with Tory MPs and High Court injunctions", he booked The Who, The Nice and Pink Floyd. The programme of the Ninth Jazz, Pop, Ballads and Blues Festival

hints that its clientele was not to the taste of other Home Counties communities: "Previously at Windsor and Sunbury", it reads.

Because trains brought the festival-goers straight to the course, few of them ventured a mile or two south to the village of Plimpton, at the foot of the South Downs. They could have visited the Saxon church, then continued to the beautiful old county town of Lewes.

Most opted instead for the daytime vision of Ditchling Beacon rising above the haze of marijuana smoke ("Rolling tabaccos and skins will be available in the Village area", promised the programme), and the night-time spectacle of Keith Emerson destroying his Hammond organ during a particularly vigorous version of "America". At a time when half a million people were making their way to Yasgur's Farm in upstate New York for Woodstock, 15,000

festival-goers in Britain were being urged that "provision of dishwashing facilities is difficult and expensive, so bring your own cutlery and get sponges off the price of your meal".

The summer was sealed on the last weekend of August. When the people of Freshwater Bay learned of plans for the Wight Festival of Music, they probably envisaged a genteel affair like the one that begins next Friday, the Cheltenham Folk Festival. After all, that nice Boh Dylan who wrote "Blowin' in the Wind" was booked to be there.

But the times they were a'changin': Boh bobbed up with The Band, and blew away much of the western half of the Isle of Wight - or Isle of Delight, as Warner Bros called it. The mantle of rock had passed from Woodstock to Wight. Southern England would never be quite the same again.

SIMON CALDER

The day the music died

Forty years ago this week Buddy Holly died in a plane crash. Andy Bull visits the Texan home town of one of rock'n'roll's greatest innovators

FOR MANY years Lubbock was in denial about Buddy Holly, its most famous son. Never mind that to the rest of the world he was one of the most innovative and creative of rock's first generation of performers, and a powerful formative influence on everyone from the Beatles down. In Lubbock you didn't mention his name in polite company. The reason being that this is the Bible belt, and in these parts rock'n'roll has always been seen as the devil's music.

But finally, Lubbock's great and good have realised that Holly is about the only thing they have going for them in terms of attracting visitors to this strange town, isolated as it is on the high windy plains of the Texas panhandle, swaddled in a sea of cotton. There is now an established Holly-tour itinerary.

The house where Holly lived in 1957 when "That'll Be the Day" was a hit still stands at 1908 37th Street. His alma mater, JT Hutchinson Junior High School (3102 Canton Ave), has a display of mementoes of him. To the north of town, just off Avenue A at 10th Street, and beyond the cattle market, is the Fair Park Coliseum, where Buddy Holly and the Crickets were at the bottom of bills headed by Elvis Presley and Bill Haley and the Comets. On the same side of town, the Buddy Holly Recreation Area, a



landscaped park, is also popular with fans, who pose for photos beside the sign (N University Ave).

The radio station (call sign KRLB), on which Buddy got a spot of his own on Sunday afternoons, is at 6602 Martin Luther King Jr Drive, on the southern edge of town. The most visible tribute to Buddy Holly is outside the Civic Centre, (8th St and Avenue Q), in the shape of an 8ft 6in bronze of the singer, holding a guitar and standing in the middle of a raised circular flower bed.

"Buddy Holly," the inscription reads, "contributed to the musical heritage of not only West Texas, but the entire world." Around the

stone wall enclosing the flower bed are plaques dedicated to 14 other musicians with local links, including Roy Orbison and Waylon Jennings, who narrowly missed being on the flight on which Holly and two other rock and roll stars, Ritchie Valens and the Big Bopper, were killed. It happened on the bitterly cold night of 3 February 1959, while Buddy was on a gruelling tour of the mid-west. That night, he chartered a light plane to take him the 400 miles from Clear Lake, Iowa to the next gig.

At 1.50am the plane crashed in thick snow, killing all on board. More than 1,500 came to the funeral, at Lubbock's Tabernacle Baptist Church

(1911 34th St). Phil Everly of the Everly Brothers was a pallbearer and there was a telegram from Elvis.

The gravesites of Buddy, his father Lawrence and mother Ella lie flush with the ground at the City of Lubbock Cemetery (3011 E 34th St), where the grass bakes in the heat, and the sprinklers hiss continually.

Buddy's stone is a rather kitsch affair, depicting a Fender guitar leaning against a Doric column. His surname reverts to the way the family has always spelled it: Holley. Sometimes there will be a sliver of something shiny protruding from the hard red soil. It will be a spectrum, placed there in homage by a fan.

To reach Lubbock, Flightbookers (0171-757 3000) quotes £325 on American Airlines via Dallas, for travel in February. In the first week of September each year the Budfest, a tribute to Buddy, is organised in the town. Details from Bill Griggs (Buddy Holly Memorial Society, Box 6123 Lubbock TX 79493). Lubbock Chamber of Commerce (1120 14th St, 001 806 761 7000) publishes a leaflet with details of Buddy Holly locations around town.

Adapted from 'Coast to Coast: A Rock Fan's US tour', by Andy Bull (Black Swan, £5.99)



Buddy Holly: Lubbock's most famous son

Redferns

NEWS OF THE WEIRD

COMPILED BY CHRISTOPHER HAWTREE

STORIES FROM AROUND THE WORLD THAT DIDN'T MAKE THE HEADLINES

PARK AND RIDE

Australia: And you're certain that the fridge will work at the end of the year? The meltdown has begun in Melbourne. A two-hour Metcard travel ticket can, in fact, last several weeks, and somebody bought a \$2.20 ticket which expires on 6 Feb 2006.

OVER-REACTIONS

Singapore: Tay Seng has been fined \$1,000 for refusing to let pregnant Ting Sim out of his taxi after she vomited on the floor. She had then called her husband for help. When the couple were reunited on the pavement, they narrowly escaped Seng's reversing into them at speed, for which he was fined a further \$2,000 and banned from driving for six months. The taxi firm will no longer require his services. His defence claimed that it was all a misunderstanding: he was being gallant, and had not wanted Ting to walk through the vomit.

Egypt: A 24-year-old woman is in hospital after swallowing insecticide in protest against her mother's forbidding her to wear jeans.

Singapore: Although Soon Chew Fah was sleeping apart from her husband Chua Lian Seng, she was still annoyed to wake at one in the morning and find him naked behind the sitting-room sofa with their maid Suratin, whom she slapped. Suratin ran to her bedroom while Soon rang her sister and then her husband's grandmother to tell them of this outrage. While doing so, she saw Suratin open the kitchen window, but her shout of not to do anything silly was too late - the maid jumped to her death. It turns out that she and Chua had not had time to get much further than a massage.

REGNUM OCCUPARE

Finland: It is in better taste than dead Elvis at Wembley. Jukka Ammondt, a professor at the University of Jyväskylä, has already recorded two albums of the King's songs in Latin, and is now going for the big time: a single of "Blue Suede Shoes" ("Esiir Kus Za-gin") in ancient Sumerian, the cuneiform language of Babylonia which died out in 2,000 BC. An album will follow in the autumn. Professor Ammondt is certain that Elvis would have relished



Undie cover: Japanese police display £174,000-worth of women's lingerie, all stolen by one man from boutiques in the city of Nagoya. Police called the thief a 'maniac'.

the idea. "The ancient Sumerians had big parties and drums and rattles, and the roots of rock may go back to man's earliest efforts to get a grip on life." One can only wonder how civilisation would have turned out if the Babylonians had been exposed to "Wooden Heart".

Rome: Best-lit: the Pope is to release a CD and video in March to meet the Easter market. Abba Pater is not another tribute to the creators of "S.O.S." and "Waterloo" but a collection of his own compositions, prayers and chants in five languages, none of them Sumerian.

Florida: Victor Brancaccio was 16 when he stamped to death 81-year-old Mollie Frazier because she had

deplored his singing of Dr Dre's vulgar rap song "Stranded on Death Row". He later returned to spray-paint her body and burn it. Too young for Death Row himself, he is now appealing against a life-sentence: the anti-depressant Zoloff is held to blame, and the case is being funded by his parents, who have won some \$3m in the Florida state lottery.

MORSELS

Australia: In Victoria, Rocky Oppedisan, proprietor of Rocky's Bakeries, has been fined \$3,300 after selling a Vienna loaf to Kathleen Beecher, who said that the family had eaten some of it, been a little puzzled by the taste and thought that this was because they were not

used to it. Only later did they reach the mouse within. "I felt ill and my daughter went and threw up. I couldn't go near bread for weeks and I wouldn't eat another Vienna loaf if you paid me." Other flavours are off the menu now: inspectors have told Mr Oppedisan to purge his premises of ants and cockroaches.

China: Six miners at Dongliang have been saved after 27 days in a blocked mine, where they survived by eating their leather belts.

Australia: Somebody at the Cheesecake Shop in Modbury made a chocolate cake with marijuana among the ingredients and put it in the fridge for a colleague - but somebody else inadvertently sold it

to a mother for her son's 17th birthday party, where his 79-year-old grandmother was among the guests. She "felt a little bit silly. The cake was nice but whoever it was had spiced it up a bit. I went for a trip to the moon - I was completely out of it." Less stalwart guests required hospital treatment but an eight-month-old baby did not seem affected. As for the shop, its owner said, "The Cheesecake Shop prides itself on its quality-control system."

Hungary: A 71-year-old woman did not starve when she found herself locked in her pantry on 22 December. She lived for a month on tomato juice and canned fruit by which time neighbours began to wonder where she was.

CUDDLY, GSOH

China: Ninety-nine-year-old Zhang Kebiao put an ad in a lonely-hearts column - "Any woman will do, but I hope that she understands the old saying, 'Half of woman is man,'" - and said that he looks only 80. He has had many offers, including several women in their twenties, and a 58-year-old woman flew to meet him forthwith.

IN THE BUFF

New York: Anybody who arrives at JFK and is pulled to one side by Customs is now offered a choice of a strip-search or an X-ray, which is not only thought less degrading for the

innocent but also reveals any drugs hidden within the body. Nobody - guilty or otherwise - has plumped for the X-ray.

North Dakota: A caller to a Burger King in Fargo convinced the manager that he was a police officer and gave a description of a 17-year-old female worker there. The manager then obeyed instructions to strip-search her for apparent theft. She was innocent, the call was a hoax and a real policeman, Lieutenant Scott Gilman, advises that "no manager of any business should decide it's necessary to strip-search any employee".

GONE TO GLORY

Michigan: Seven workers at the Independence Professional Fireworks factory at Osseo cannot be identified after an explosion.

COOPED UP

Los Angeles: Jai Thomas arrived with some friends for a \$3,000, three-week holiday in America and the Caribbean - but reckoned without his old religious-education teacher back home in Australia. Exuberant after some exams in 1991, Jai had cracked an egg on her head, for which ovate blessing he apologised. But she pressed charges of unlawful assault, and he was convicted and fined \$350. He became a computer-product specialist and put the egg crime on a US visa application three years ago, with no problem. Now, however, when visas are not required, he was held for 48 hours, during which time he was asked if he had ever taken drugs, suffered from TB or been in a psychiatric institution. "There's more to this than the egg incident," he was told.

UPDATE

California: Orange County Superior Court Judge Tam Schimann has issued a temporary injunction which requires Truong Tran to remove the Communist flag and poster of Ho Chi Minh which adorned his Hitek video store in the Little Saigon district of Westminster. Protesters celebrated outside with a dragon dance, but Tran, one of the boat people, is unfazed. He says he is not a Communist but that Vietnam has changed and he wants trade with the country to be regular. The case continues.

THE NEWS QUIZ

1) "It would have been more of a shock if he had been sober." So said a member of airport staff after a man was arrested at Heathrow for being drunk and incapable. About whom did he say it?
a) George Best
b) Liam Gallagher
c) Oliver Reed
d) Dudley Moore

2) Two electronics manufacturers went to the High Court hoping to prove that each others' inventions sucked. Who were they?

3) It has been a bad week for the following. Why?
a) The Queen Mother
b) The Ford Escort
c) King Hussein of Jordan
d) David Montgomery

4) It has been a good week for the following. Why?
a) President Chirac
b) Boris, the Siberian eagle owl



Flying high: Best, Gallagher, Reed or Moore? (See Q1)



Hard times: Queen Mum, the Escort, King Hussein or Montgomery? (See Q3)

c) Bracken, the peregrine falcon
d) Ted Hughes

h) Steven Spielberg
c) Michael Crichton
d) Michael Grade

5) "Lawyers are unscrupulous, psychiatrists are crazy, cops are psychopaths, and actors are spoilt brats." Who said it and why?
a) Michael Winner

6) At a press conference, police unveiled a life-size cardboard cutout of a man. Who is the man and why the cutout?
7) Advertisements were

placed in a number of national newspapers, offering the chance of a reward of up to £1m. Who placed them?
a) Mohamed al-Fayed
h) Jerry Hall
c) Kenneth Starr
d) Prince Michael of Kent

8) Who will benefit from a

package of "family friendly" measures announced on Thursday as part of the Fairness at Work Legislation?
a) Nurses
b) Mothers
c) Single mothers
d) Dentists

9) One hundred teenage girls at a North London convent school are being taught about unwanted pregnancies in a rather unusual way. What is it?

10) A former member of the Cabinet has just put their home up for sale. Who is it?
a) Charlie Whelan
b) Geoffrey Robinson
c) Peter Mandelson
d) Margaret Thatcher

11) Who have become prisoners in their own homes?

12) Which hard drug could end up being the soft option?

BACKGAMMON

CHRIS BRAY

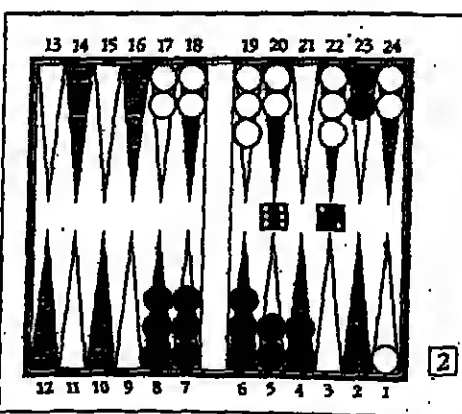
HERE'S A position spotted by Jake Jacobs and first published in Carol Joy Cole's excellent *Flint Area Backgammon News* - which is by far the longest-running backgammon newsletter. It will celebrate its 21st birthday in June of this year.

Black is involved in a prime-versus-prime and has a 62 to play. At first sight this is obvious: he should escape one of his back men by playing 23/15. What is there to think about?

As usual, quite a lot. White has the better home board - four points against three - and if black runs out with one man then white has a ready-made plan. He will attack black's last back man in order to give himself time to extricate his own man that is stranded on black's one-point. This plan could of course go horribly wrong if black hits another man - but at least it is a plan.

Now look what happens if black plays 8/2. 7/5. This seems anti-positional as black volunteers an apparently unnecessary direct shot. However, even if white hits the shot he is not much better off, as he will still not be at the edge of black's prime (unless he hits with 11). Meanwhile his own blockade will quickly crumble - and now he doesn't have the option of attacking black in his home board.

In essence black has sufficient timing to allow white to destroy his prime, rather than try-



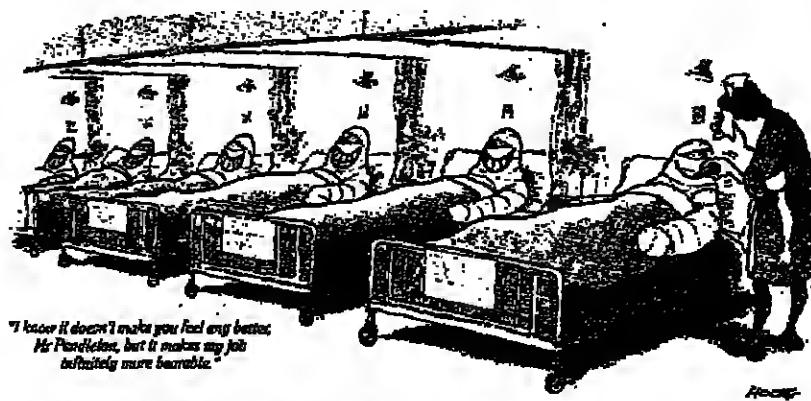
ing to win by escaping from behind it. Playing 8/2, 7/5 is therefore a better plan than running with 23/15. Johannes Levermann, the strong German player, found this move when playing against the legendary X-22 in a recent big-money jackpot. Remember, consider all your candidate plays, even if at first they feel wrong - you can't play a move you don't see.

Flint Area Backgammon News can be found on the Internet at: <http://homepage.interaccess.com/skatz/flint.html>

Readers wishing to contact Chris Bray should note his change of e-mail address to: brayc@globalnet.co.uk

CLASSIC CARTOONS

MARTIN PLIMMER ON TREVOR HOLDER (HOLTE)



ONE OF the five people nominated for the 1933 Hall of Fame by *Vanity Fair* was HT Webster - a cartoonist. This seems odd to us now because cartoonists are no longer cherished. "The age of the cartoon is past," says Trevor Holder, who drew this. "Most publications are run by accountants, who don't see any point in paying people to do little drawings."

Holder was a bored director of a graphics

company until he gave it up for full-time cartoon work at the age of 40. He achieved his "ultimate goal" - getting a cartoon accepted by *Punch* - within a month, after which his darkly imagined scenarios and mouse-like protagonists played an important part in the final act of the magazine's 151 years as a cartoon institution: he drew *Punch* and Judy walking into the sunset for the old-style *Punch*'s last cover in 1992.

THE INFORMATION



NEXT WEEK IN THE INFORMATION, free with *The Independent* every Saturday

The 50 Best Classic Computer Games

If you're looking for virtual fun, who is the better bet: Lara Croft? Or Sonic the Hedgehog? We've got the answers, as *The Information's* panel of experts whip their joysticks out and guide you round the very best in computer games, from Sega to PCs, sports simulators to shoot 'em ups. Game on.

THE INFORMATION - it's all you need to know

ANSWERS

1) Oliver Reed. He was arrested after throwing beer over shoppers at Terminal 1. 2) Blackbriar and Dawson. Both companies had accused the other of malicious falsehood and libel. 3) The judge found both guilty of libel. 4) The 36-year-old underwent a traumatic intestinal operation. 5) The 36-year-old underwent a traumatic intestinal operation. 6) The judge found both guilty of libel. 7) The 36-year-old underwent a traumatic intestinal operation. 8) The 36-year-old underwent a traumatic intestinal operation. 9) The judge found both guilty of libel. 10) The 36-year-old underwent a traumatic intestinal operation. 11) The judge found both guilty of libel. 12) The 36-year-old underwent a traumatic intestinal operation. 13) The judge found both guilty of libel. 14) The 36-year-old underwent a traumatic intestinal operation. 15) The judge found both guilty of libel. 16) The 36-year-old underwent a traumatic intestinal operation. 17) The judge found both guilty of libel. 18) The 36-year-old underwent a traumatic intestinal operation. 19) The judge found both guilty of libel. 20) The 36-year-old underwent a traumatic intestinal operation. 21) The judge found both guilty of libel. 22) The 36-year-old underwent a traumatic intestinal operation. 23) The judge found both guilty of libel. 24) The 36-year-old underwent a traumatic intestinal operation.

MODERN MANNERS: YOUR CUT-OUT-AND-KEEP GUIDE TO SURVIVING THE MINEFIELD

Dear Serena



Dear Serena,
At a communal meal, should one wait until everyone has been served before one starts eating? I think yes, my fiancé says no. Who is right?
Kirstie, Leeds

Grand manners are always supposed to dictate that the moment a plate lands in front of you, you should get your snout straight into the trough like a Tory minister. If you start chomping while your hostess is still slaving over a hot-plate, some individuals will think you're frightfully frightful. Others, however, will think you're frightfully frightful: you wouldn't start eating before the Queen, would you? At least wait until your hostess has said encouraging words before you pick up your eating irons.
Also, don't be over-enthusiastic about shovelling up the pheasant in very grand houses. Certain elements among the toffs, who always delight in epate-ing the bourgeois, seem lately to have taken to saying grace at the beginning of meals, sometimes ever.

going so far as importing a priest, clergyman for the purpose. You'll look mighty fine spluttering a T. F. Deum round a mouthful of Brussels sprouts, won't you?
Dear Serena,
I occasionally drop in to my local sauna on a Saturday afternoon for a little R&R. I have encountered someone severe, at times, and we seem to get on very well, if you know what I mean. The other day, though, he suggested we might go for a drink once we'd got our clothes on, and I found myself struck by panic. I mean, he seems nice enough, but I thought people don't want to saunas for anonymity. Is it acceptable to make dates in these circumstances? Should I give it a go?
Garth, Manchester

Why not? It could make an interesting story to tell the grandchildren.
Dear Serena,
I recently found out that I had been

passed over for a job when the current incumbent started doing it. No one had had the manners to tell me. Is it normal these days not to bother to inform job candidates that they have failed?
Renee, Battersea

It's not normal, but it seems, sadly, to have become common practice these days among a certain type of employer to eschew courtesy to staff members. You are obviously working for one of these. I wouldn't bother saying anything, if I were you. Instead, start tunnelling your way out. When you get a new job, hand your resignation to

personnel rather than your colleagues. They will, as is the way with personnel departments, fail to communicate the information to the relevant people. You can then derive considerable personal satisfaction from the fact that the first time these ill-mannered employers find out about you leaving is the day you don't turn up for work.
Dear Serena,
I don't seem to have the staying power I had when I was a lad, and worry that I can't satisfy my partner like I used to. I was thinking about trying Viagra. Would you recommend it?
Roger, Marlowe

If you're not put off by potential heart attacks or

crashing headaches, there's no harm in giving it a go, I suppose, though staying power is one of those things whose value has been greatly exaggerated by the pornography industry. Technique has always been more valued by those in the know. But for heaven's sake, check that your partner has the time and inclination before you go popping anything; there are few anaphrodisiacs more effective than being expected to drop the laundry! The baby's nether garments when confronted without warning with a grinning sap proudly toting a chemical stiffie that won't go away.
Dear Serena,
I am going to a wedding in Scotland and was wondering if you could recommend a good outfitters where I might buy a kilt? And what should I wear underneath?
Leonard, Lincoln

Yes, and I can also recommend a good place to buy a turban in case you get invited to a Sikh wedding. As to what to

wear underneath, you should follow the native example and invest in a pair of frilly knickers in a contrasting fabric. Oh, and make sure, if there's a reeling, that you fling your arms over your head and shriek "Hoots, Mon" every 10 seconds. That way you'll be sure to make an impression.
Dear Serena,
How long should a widower wait to appear in public with a new partner?
C. Gloucestershire

Probably until the new partner has had enough hair-dyeing, facial treatments and styling advice to compete with the previous wife. Then again, there is only so much one can do: as my granny used to say, you can't make a Dresden shepherdess out of an old leather boot.
Knotty problems with the world today? Write to Dear Serena, The Independent, 18th Floor, 1 Canada Square, London E14 4DL, where they will be treated with customary sympathy



ARIES

YOU MAY confidently expect to be more than popular this week (mmm, much more), but the respectable among you won't be pleased about the Mars is cosy nicely up to Venus but the square with Neptune is spinning strange desires out of your subconscious. Either repress them and become neurotic, or act them out and have your phone number chalked up on toilet walls. Some aptitude for deceit may just help you through.



TAURUS

YOU WERE doing so well in love, you thought it would last for ever. It was even getting spiritual there among the tumbled sheets. Passion isn't finished; it is to go on all week, but then you overshoot and collapse. Perhaps your lover leaves, exhausted; perhaps you are overwhelmed with disgust when someone turns the lights on. Maybe you have confused sexual passion with your financial ambitions. That's generally fatal. Good night.



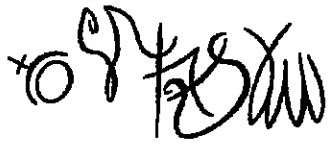
GEMINI

WHAT A week, with powerful aspects stirring your pot this way and that. Pluto reveals to you the mysterious depths - now at last you understand why things are like this. Then an important conjunction with Uranus confers genius upon you - you are brilliant, you are in touch with the universal mind, you are practically telepathic. And, finally, you are given the creative power and stamina to act it all out. So now what's your excuse for it all going wrong?



CANCER

YOU SUFFER from a plangent melancholy. There is a memory of lost love, and time passing. You hear the laughter in the next room, and it is unbearable. It is easy to be depressed by those confident voices at the next table, people who have proper friends, and more than they need. You seem to be up to your elbows in the sink, with cads taking advantage of you from behind. Well, it is attention, after all. The answer isn't to lose weight.



POPPY FOLLY

YOUR STARS: IT COULD HAPPEN

If this is the dawning of the age of Aquarius, it's taking an awfully long time - can't we sit down? They're exhausting, Aquarians, especially when you marry them. They're always searching for the new. They're society's random mutation, and, like the majority of all mutations, an error.
But it's only after all the fireworks have gone out that you discover how disappointing the sign is. They are keen to tell you that it's the sign of genius, startling originality, explosive contributions to human knowledge. And yet look at you in fact get: Olaf Palme, John Lydon, Elaine Stritch and half the Smothers Brothers (Tom).
You want a novelist? You get Norman Mailer. You want an actor? You get Clark Gable. You want a queen? You get Beatrix of the Netherlands. You want a butch American expat writer? You get Gertrude Stein.
In truth the sign is divided between a) has-beens, b)

those who never will be and c) those who never really were (see *aque vale* Val Doonican and Prunella Gee). But the has-beens make the most impressive list: Telly Savalas, Denis Norden and Frank Muir, Ned Sherrin, Jimmy Tarbuck, Oliver Reed, Roberta Flack, Robert Wagner, George Mikes, John McEnroe, Janet Suzman, Anthony Howard, Nyrée Dawn Porter, Libby Purves, Bamber Gascoigne, Tony Blackburn, John Profumo (you'd need something the size of the Vietnam vets monument to do this particular list justice).
Aquarians are rotters, essentially. Their cardinal virtues are entirely out of whack - they have too much faith, far too much hope and no charity at all.
But suitably enough, for a sign ruled by Uranus, we find such gay icons as Tallulah Bankhead, Morgan Fairchild, Franklin D Roosevelt, and Boris Spassky, as well as the famous perverts Havelock Ellis and James Watt (who had to invent the steam engine in order to power his latest mail-ordered device).



SAGITTARIUS

AS YOUR ruling planet is in semi-square to Uranus, this is the week you have half a chance of losing your fortune, your family, your reputation and anything else you value. You just get going and suddenly you get bored, or you fall over, or someone with a sweeter profile catches your eye and you abruptly change direction. You are always in danger of buying high and selling low. Now the danger is buying high and giving it all to charity.



CAPRICORN

AT LAST you come into standing water; the tide must be turning. You can stay in the same place just by holding your breath. This is where habit lets you down; now is the time when you could make progress. You have energy stored, if only you could access it, but you feel you are caught in a web of your own spinning. You might console yourself with the thought that you are the spider, and there are still some flies out there, despite the cold.



AQUARIUS

YOU'RE OFF in the higher realms, beyond the frontiers of visible science, below the horizon of the known world. Your will is attuned to your intellect and you are pursuing a goal beyond the understanding of your friends (who think you're bats, by the way). A faulty aspect with Jupiter means you may in fact just be a crank (there is no way for you to tell the difference, but it will be quite obvious to us). *C'est magnifique, mais ne pas la vie.*



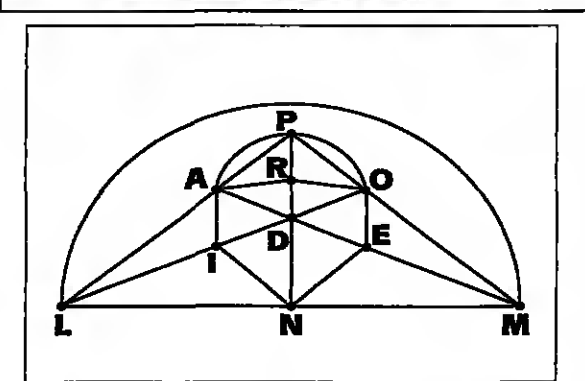
PISCES

ALL RIGHT, so there are impulses coming up from deep down, from the darkness where it all began, but don't look on the results as sexual deviation (just because your partner does). Look on it as therapy to fulfil childhood longings (don't tell your partner what you're doing). If you abandon yourself to your astrology you will drink deep of alcohol, drug abuse and sexual excess. But Mercury helps you to explain it all away later.

IT'S A circus out there, chaotic and illogical. A judge says the cruelly used on a defenceless chimpanzee "beyond what was necessary". Necessary cruelty, there's a concept. Being cruel to be kind. It may make legal sense, but not common sense.
This week also the New Millennium Experience Company tried with limited success to convert two Dome sceptics by walking them round it. Oh well, two down, 52,619,998 of us to go.
Experience can pop the prejudicial bubble. My unexpected sighting of our stately Dome (of last week's column) converted me at a glance. It needed a direct sighting and not remote viewing. My driver remained unimpressed perhaps because, like Hercules, he was shielded from its Medusan charms by seeing it only in the mirror.
The dearth of road signs on my road to Damascus (or "Damn! Don't ask us") augurs ill for visitors. Or is the plan to lure people there by mistake? After all, some things (eg happiness) are best approached indirectly. All roads lead to dome.

PUZZLEMASTER

BY CHRIS MASLANKA



(Phonics, Phonics, Phonics) add the new mantra: Literacy Numeracy. Musicality Not quite in alphabetic order, but, it can at least spell its own initials, unlike the SR's.
Oh and Puzzle Panel's back, though I had wondered if all the strands would come together in time. I'd set aside January to tackle a backlog of paperwork and to immerse my asthmatic lungs in breathable air in the Alps or Palm Desert.
But a frantic call from the editor put paid to that. The series had been brought forward two weeks. No one seemed

terribly sure why or how the mistake had happened. But then in complex organisations things happen without anyone having done them, which saves on apologies. With ineluctable Sherlockian logic I eliminated all suspects one by one till only I remained. I must have done it.
What the hell, when have I ever been up-to-date, on time or had a clear desk? I can't even find the intray. My quest for air would have to wait. But my lungs had other ideas. Flu left me with asthma so bad that breathing was painful. Even slight wheezing can upset radio listeners. A woman once wrote to point out that she paid her licence fee in full and deserved someone who could breathe properly. I do understand. I once listened to a talk and registered only the bits where the speaker's teeth whistled. It set my ears on edge.
The show had to go on. A Harley Street doctor was found who - between my script meeting and tea with the panelists - injected me with depomedrone. It didn't

stop the pain, but at least I didn't wheeze, or croak.
From then on all went smoothly. It was, of course, a dream team: David Singmaster, William Harlinton and Val Gilbert. But also it was a return to the magical, manageable, mythical world of puzzles.
Solutions to last week's puzzles:
1. A 3 x 3 magic square can only be constructed in integers if its magic number is a multiple of 3.
2. BOG ASPHODEL
3. NeuroN, INDOUROPEAN. Brian Glyde suggests PLEURO(S). Apparently it's a sonnet (sic), especially in an insect's thorax.
Points to Ponder:
1. You leave home for the dome (see picture, left) traversing each part of the network exactly once. Where's home? Where's the dome?
2. How many states do 65 sets of traffic lights have?
Comments to: indy@puzzlemaster.co.uk 'Puzzle Panel': R4, Fridays at 1:30pm

GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

LARRY ADLER, 84, MOUTH ORGANIST



I TOOK a lady to see *Show Boat* last night, which reminds me of a joke. It's about Mrs Oscar Hammerstein talking to a lady at a party, and the lady says, "Look who just came in. It's Jerome Kern who wrote 'Old Man River'!" and Mrs Hammerstein said, "Jerome Kern did NOT write 'Old Man River', my husband wrote 'Old Man River'." What Jerome Kern wrote was 'dah, dah, dah-daaah'...
As a kid, I remember spending a day playing with some marbles in the street, but another kid came along and took my marbles. Then a big boy came up and said, "What are you crying about kid?" When I told him, he took the other boy by the feet and held him upside down until the marbles dropped out of his pocket, then he invited me to join his gang.
We used to rob department stores, and I specialised in the candy counters because they were easy to reach. Then I went on the stage when I was

14 and, when I was 19, I read in the paper that the leader of my gang had been electrocuted for murder. Well, suppose I hadn't gone on the stage? I'd have been in a gang, and I might have been with him on that job, because he was my hero.
Next month I'll be back in my home town of Baltimore, where I have the distinction of being the only student ever expelled from the Peabody Conservatory of Music. The students were supposed to take part in a recital, and I'd prepared a waltz by Grieg. But when I came up on stage, the superintendent said: "And what are we going to play, my little man?" So little man went to the piano and played "Yes, We Have No Bananas".
Larry Adler plays the Queen Elizabeth Hall, London SE1, on 12 February. His latest album 'The Genius of Larry Adler' (Decca) is released on Monday
PANDORA MELLY

YOUR MONEY

HOW TO MAKE IT • HOW TO SPEND IT



Do the PEP quickstep

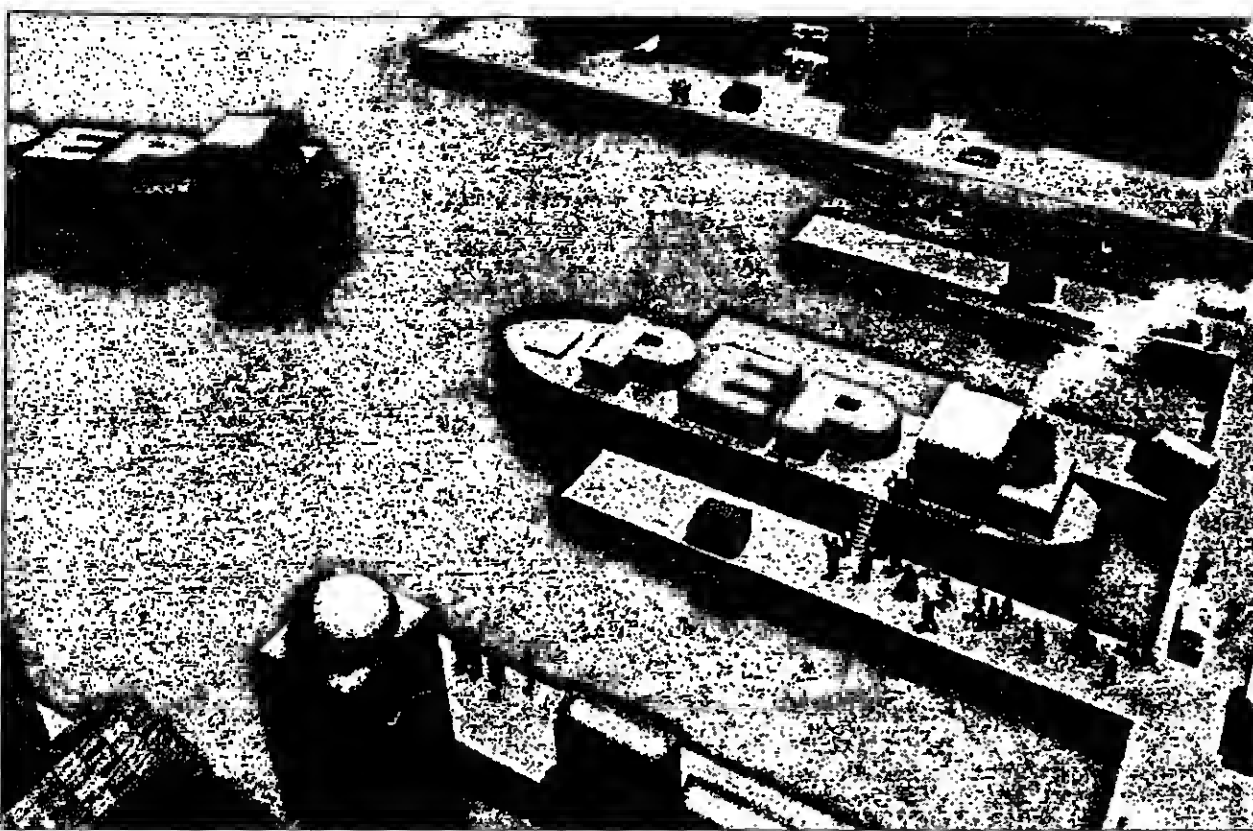
They are being replaced in weeks, but personal equity plans can still make sense. By Tony Lyons

There are now just two months left in which to take out a personal equity plan. Time is running out before they are replaced in April by individual savings accounts. But in view of the volatility of the stockmarket, if you haven't already invested in a PEP in the current financial year, should you do so now?

Certainly, if you are a taxpayer, especially if you pay higher rate tax, the answer is yes. Any financial adviser will tell you that PEPs are for long-term investors, those prepared to wait five years or longer before cashing in. Over almost all five-year periods since the end of the First World War, equities have outperformed all other homes for investment. The ability to shelter £5,000 in a general rLP and £3,000 in a single-company PEP free of capital gains tax, and to receive back half the income taken in tax after 5 April, is very worthwhile.

It used to be that all PEPs were free of income tax, but the rule change in the last budget will halve the advanced corporation tax - the tax charged on company profits - that can be reclaimed to 10 per cent for five years. After this year, PEP managers will not be able to reclaim any of this income for you. While this may make PEPs marginally less attractive, it still makes them an ideal home for long-term investment.

However, even taking a long-term view, should you be investing in equities with many analysts expecting share prices to fall? "Don't worry too much about timing," says Ann Davis of Fidelity. "Obviously it is better to buy when prices are low,



Don't miss the boat; there are only three months before PEPs are replaced by individual savings accounts

but leave the timing to the professionals, the fund managers." "Never try to second-guess the market," advises Roddy Kohn, of Kohn Conger, independent financial advisers. "Just a couple of years ago, many were saying that the UK market was too high when the FTSE 100 was standing around the 3,400 level. We all know what happened since then."

At the moment, the short-term risks are higher than usual. So decide what type of investor you are. If you are prepared for a high risk, then you should not delay your purchase

of PEPs in the hope that prices will drift lower. You might as well plunge into equities now. Already many of the leading groups are making tempting offers. M&G, for example, will give you as much as £200, while other groups, such as Mercury, will cut their initial charges by 2 per cent.

It is not the time to be splashing out on emerging market investments, even if they may show strong recovery later on. It is better to concentrate on the UK and Europe. The latter is one of the few sectors favoured by most advisers, getting a boost as it will from the recent introduction of the

euro. To capitalise on this, Scottish Widows has just launched a new Eurofund Trust that can be "PEPped". This will concentrate on the 11 members of the EU's monetary union "which has a population greater than the USA, but (whose) stockmarkets are undercapitalised by comparison," says Jamie MacLeod, of Scottish Widows Fund Management. The group believes that equity investment will increase in appeal and that continental pension funds, with a much larger single, home market, will be investing more in shares than they used to. And

to entice new investors, the initial charge has been reduced from 5 to 3 per cent during the introductory offer period.

If you are more risk averse and worried about where share prices are heading, then there are a number of protected funds available from groups such as Close and Barclays B2. One of the most popular is also from Scottish Widows. Called the SafetyPlus PEP, the underlying unit trust grew 41 per cent to £202m in the last quarter of 1998. While its price can be raised at any time, it can only be reduced once a year. When you buy, you know that during the coming year, the minimum it will be worth is 95 per cent of your PEP investment.

For anyone needing income, or who wants to take minimal risks, corporate bonds should be considered. As they invest in government gilts and loan stock issued by the best British companies, the income generated remains tax free. Instead of taking the income, you can accumulate it within the PEP. But remember, as these are not equity investments, they are likely to show lower growth rates over the long term.

Don't forget that so long as you invest your PEP money before 5 April, you can always change the investment vehicle later on. While no new money will be allowed into PEPs after that date, transfers will still be allowed. This means that you can invest in a low-risk PEP now; if markets settle or you feel less nervous about them, change the underlying fund later on. Most transfers within the same management group are usually done free of charge or for minimal costs, although these may be higher if moving to a new management group.

The Independent is offering readers a free "Guide to PEPs", sponsored by Scottish Widows Fund Management, with advice on the types of PEPs available, charges, and a list of leading PEP managers and numbers. Call 0345 678910 to get your free copy.

BARGAIN HUNTER



Property of the week

Three for one

YOU GET two for the price of one with this property in Great Moulton, 12 miles from Diss, in Norfolk, an easy drive from the coast and the Broads. Barn Meadow and Carpenter's Cottage share six acres of formal and informal gardens, including an orchard and arboretum. In fact, it's almost three for the price of one, as Carpenter's was originally two cottages under a thatched roof (now pantiled). Both properties have been recently restored and extended. Offers around £225,000 to Strutt & Parker (01603 617431).

ROSALIND RUSSELL

Car of the week

Grand offer

USED CAR sales are still going strong and some of the UK's biggest car supermarkets have mass-market cars that are now very cheap. Concept Car Supermarkets have branches in Cannock, Chertsey, Southampton, Manchester and Glasgow (0800 9807127). They are offering up to £1,000 off certain models. A selection of N-registered Ford Mondeo 1.8 LX automatics with a sticker price of £4,995 have now been reduced to a much more reasonable £3,995. Just as important, there are some attractive finance terms.

JAMES RUPPERT

Deal of the week

Performance for a price

PERPETUAL, ONE of the country's most respected fund managers, has launched its first pension contract. Its charges are on the high side. For every £100 put in, £5 comes off in an initial charge. The contract also charges £24 a year in admin fees and up to 1.5 per cent a year in fund management charges. It also offers the chance to take a payment holiday without penalty. If Perpetual can repeat the glittering returns of the past, and savers keep up the contract for decades, not years, the charges fade into insignificance. Available through independent financial advisers.

ANDREW VERITY

Pension giants fall out over quote manipulation claims

Are you being misled over your pension? Sun Life fears you might be. By Paul Slade

PERSONAL PENSION giants like Standard Life are manipulating their quotes to produce contracts which look good on paper, but give many customers a poor deal.

That's the charge from Axa Sun Life, which accuses rivals of artificially boosting the transfer values they offer. These show the amount you would get if you stopped your premiums early and took the money in your pension to another company. But Axa Sun Life research shows that only about 15 per cent of people who stop their premiums early take this route. The other 85 per cent leave the fund where it is, turning their pension into what insurers call a paid-up policy (PUP).

Concentrating on transfer values alone therefore lets some companies sell pensions by pointing to high transfer values, knowing very few customers will ever take them up in practice. Companies named by Axa Sun Life as offenders include Standard Life, Scottish Amicable, Clerical Medical and Norwich Union.

AXA Sun Life business development manager (pensions) Steve Burgess says: "Some companies are cynically ma-

nipulating their figures so they look good on a standard quote." But Standard Life pensions marketing manager Andrew Black denies the charge. He says: "In general terms, contracts offering good transfer values also offer good PUP maturity values. They're not identical, but there's a strong link."

The effect of switching from transfer values to PUP maturity values can be dramatic, however. If you take the example of a 25-year pension, with premiums of £200 a month, and look at which one produces the best transfer value after one year, Clerical Medical tops a list of 12 leading companies. Look

Company	Plan transferred	Plan sold up
Clerical Medical	1	12
Scottish Mutual	2	11
Norwich Union	3	5
Friends Provident	4	8
CGU	5	7
Scottish Amicable	6	10
Scottish Equitable	7	6
Standard Life	8	9
Royal & Sun Alliance	9	3
Scottish Widows	10	2
Legal & General	11	1
Sun Life	12	1

instead at which company produces the best PUP maturity value, and Clerical Medical drops to the very bottom of the table (see left).

Nigel Chambers, deputy managing director at IFAs Johnstone Douglas, warns that customers can have either high early transfer values or high maturity values, but not both. He says: "Insurers can collect their charges early and have - as Sun Life has - a higher maturity value. Or they do as Standard Life does and take a level charge all the way through, which gives you lower maturity values. You can't do both."

Nearly 30 per cent of people with a regular premium personal pension stop their payments in the first four years. Whichever option you choose when stopping, you cannot take the pension's benefits until it matures at retirement age. The regulators demand that pension companies quote both transfer value payouts and full maturity values. These appear on the key features documents which all customers receive. PUP maturity values can be included, but there is no obligation. AXA Sun Life plans to lobby for PUP maturity values also to be made compulsory. Burgess



The Sun Life Centre in Bristol - centre of a pensions storm

says: "The only figures shown on the quote are the transfer value and the full maturity value. What they don't show are the PUP maturity values."

Once again, Black does not agree. He claims customers would simply be confused if faced with three different figures: "Early transfer values and full maturity values illustrate the hulk of the story. They bring out what I think are the key messages. It's a question of balance, and of choosing the right amount of information."

Full maturity values assume you will continue premiums throughout the pension's term. PUP maturity values show what happens if you stop after a given number of years.

Chambers thinks the Government's plans to bring in new low-cost stakeholder pensions could lead to high early transfer values backing on companies offering them. AXA Sun Life has its own axe to grind in this particular row. The company's Lifestyle range of personal pensions, launched on 14 January, is built round providing high PUP maturity values.

*Estimated gross distribution gross income reinvested and redemption yield 7.8% per annum as at 11.12.98. Estimated yields will vary and up to date figures are available on request at the number below. **The dealing spread was 0.85% as at 11.12.98. The M&G High Yield Corporate Bond Fund is managed by M&G Securities Limited (regulated by the Personal Investment Authority and FSA). M&G do not offer investment advice or make any recommendations about investments. We only promote the packaged products and services of the M&G marketing group. The tax regime of PEPs and ISAs may change, and the value of the tax benefits will depend on the individual circumstances of the investor. The price of units and the income from them can go down as well as up, you may not get back as much as you invested. Issued by M&G Financial Services Limited (regulated by the Personal Investment Authority), M&G House, Victoria Road, Cheltenham GL51 1ER.

The Good Buy PEP from M&G

Choose the M&G High Yield Corporate Bond PEP for your last-ever PEP and you'll be going out on a high. The current tax free yield is an impressive 7.8%, and there's even some potential for capital growth. What's more, there's no initial charge* and no withdrawal fee after 5 years.

Investing in bonds issued by medium sized and fast-growing companies, and drawing on the skills of our award winning fixed interest investment team, this exciting PEP Fund offers a higher yield than traditional corporate bond funds, but lower risk than stockmarket investments.

And there's another valuable benefit. Invest £1,000 or more in unit trusts through the M&G PEP before 5th April this year, and you will qualify for a voucher worth up to £200 to use when you invest in a new M&G ISA in the 1999/2000 tax year.

Make sure your PEP investments go out on a high - call now for details and application forms.

7.8%
TAX FREE YIELD

M&G

FREE ISA VOUCHER WORTH UP TO £200
WHEN YOU INVEST UP TO £6,000 IN THE M&G HIGH YIELD CORPORATE BOND PEP

0800 210 224
Lines are open 24 hours, 7 days a week. No surcharge will apply. For your protection all telephone calls may be recorded.

INSIDE	Financial makeover	2	Shopping	8-9	Property	11
	Brian Tora	4	Motoring	10	Hot spot: Edinburgh	12

PERSONAL FINANCE

A problem shared...

FINANCIAL MAKEOVER

NAMES: EDMUND AND JUDITH HUGHES AGES: 31 AND 34 OCCUPATIONS: RESEARCH ENGINEER AND SENIOR NURSE

Edmund and Judith live in Hampshire and married last year. They are both employed, Edmund as a university research engineer and Judith as a senior nurse. Having got the savings for the wedding and new home out of the way, they now feel that they need to organise their personal finances.

They are particularly concerned about pension planning. Both of them are members of their employers' schemes: Judith has been in the National Health Service Pension Scheme since 1986 and Edmund joined the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) in December 1997. Their main worry is over Edmund's pension, as his current scheme is the only provision he has made.

The couple have some savings accounts scattered about, and each has a Tessa. They also have some shares: Judith has Halifax windfall shares, and Edmund holds some "blue chips". In addition to this, Judith has been paying into a low-cost endowment plan since 1989. They have a repayment mortgage, which is fixed for four years, and have taken out a joint level term life assurance to cover the loan. They save £400 per month to fund home improvements and holidays, and would like to continue this if possible.

The adviser

Fiona Price of Fiona Price & Partners, 33 Great Queen Street, Covent Garden, London WC2B 5AA. Telephone 0171-430 0366.

The advice

For a newly married couple, Edmund and Judith's finances are in surprisingly good order. However, here are a few areas which need to be addressed.

As always, the first thing to look at is short-term savings. They need to build on the amount they currently have and should aim for at least three months' normal expenditure to cover any emergencies. Their savings are spread over three accounts and the rates on the First Direct high interest savings and Nationwide monthly savings account are not very competitive.

They should transfer the money in these accounts to the Nationwide Invest Direct account, which is



Feeling the squeeze: Edmund and Judith Hughes

Russell Sachs

paying 5.9 per cent gross for they could consider Prudential's egg savings account, with a gross interest rate of 7.25 per cent, currently the best rate available, provided they are happy to put up with egg's administration problems.

As for the Tessas, Edmund's is with the Bradford & Bingley and I think that he should leave it there. Judith might want to consider moving her Halifax Tessa to get a better rate, as long as there are no penalties involved.

Investments: I would advise Judith to keep her low-cost endowment as it has been going for nine years. It suits her cautious attitude to risk and

it would be inadvisable to surrender it, as it won't have made much, if any, profit. There could also be penalties on surrender.

Edmund should keep his shares, and I see little point in putting them into a PEP. It is a small shareholding and unlikely to give rise to a capital gains tax problem. And the income from PEPs will no longer be as tax-efficient, due to the reduction in tax credits on dividends. The cost of the PEP may outweigh the advantages here.

Protection: Further, Edmund and Judith see protection as a low priority. Both of their employers provide good levels of sickness

benefit, so there is very little need for permanent health insurance (PHI) - especially for Judith. Their employers' schemes also have in-built death benefits which, together with the term assurance covering their mortgage, are more than adequate for their needs.

I would, however, suggest that they take out a critical illness plan, as extra protection for their home loan. This type of insurance pays out a lump sum in the event of contracting certain serious illnesses, and would give them some peace of mind if the unthinkable were to happen. A suitable plan, covering both lives for a sum assured of £100,000, costs £35 to £40 a month.

Pensions: Edmund and Judith have said that their main concern is pensions. Edmund works on a contract basis and is less certain than Judith of his future career path. His aim is to retire at 65 on the maximum pension. This would mean that if he stayed with the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) he would have a shortfall in his target pension, equivalent to £4,210 a year in today's terms. He can make up this shortfall by buying "added years" within the scheme, making additional voluntary contributions to his employer's AVC scheme, or taking out a free standing AVC scheme.

Each one has its pros and cons. However, on balance an AVC scheme would probably be preferable to added years. Though a close run thing, on balance an AVC would suit Edmund's attitude to investment better in a favourable climate. The analysis I carried out showed that Edmund would have to pay £77 per month, before tax relief, to achieve his objective.

Judith has been in the NHS Pensions Scheme since 1986. She originally joined the scheme in 1983, but was offered the opportunity by her employer to opt out after three years' service and take a return of contributions, which she decided to do. Though she later opted back in, it is a decision she now regrets.

She is anxious to make up the loss. Added to this, she would like to retire at the age of 55. Fortunately, as she was a member of her scheme before 1995, this is her scheme retirement age. It means that if she continues in service until the age of 55 she will have 34 years' service, and because it is also her "normal retirement age", she can fund for the maximum pension (which is based on 40 years' service). Judith, like Edmund, has the same top up choices. After completing an analysis, I suggest that Judith buy added years. This will provide her with an inflation-proofed pension and is compatible with her very cautious attitude to risk.

My calculations show that Judith should be able to fund the additional cost of her pension using her spare cash. But she should write to the NHS Pensions Agency, giving her national insurance number to get a breakdown of the cost.

Millions lost to the tax moguls

ANDREW VERITY

Overcharging by the Revenue is unnoticed and goes uncorrected every year

TAXPAYERS STRUGGLING with tomorrow's deadline for tax payments might be comforted to know that someone, somewhere in the financial world, is standing up for the little guy. That champion of consumer rights, the Personal Investment Authority, has been flexing its muscles.

This week it was Liverpool Victoria, fined a record £900,000 for serious and widespread failures to comply with the rules.

Two weeks ago, another regulator, Imro, fined Lloyds TSB £425,000 for persistent poor management of its unit trusts. A large part of the problem was down to its computer system.

Right enough. But there are some quarters of the financial world which lurk out of reach of the regulatory machine. In this customer's hell, poor administration is widespread. Customers are frequently overcharged. They are never paid interest when they're owed money. And they're often forced into overdraft. What's more, it's all done with impunity. The culprits' actions affect our finances more intimately than any unit trust company. And yet they are never fined. In fact, they fine us.

Which brings us back to the Inland Revenue. The sins of Lloyds TSB have been repeated, almost to the letter, by the Revenue. Overcharging, to the tune of hundreds of millions of pounds, goes unnoticed and uncorrected every year. No interest is paid when they have incorrectly estimated your tax liability and take months to refund it, though officials will slap a surcharge plus interest on those of us who underestimate.

This week it emerged that the Revenue's bad admin had caused over 800,000 incorrect tax returns to be sent out. The returns were sent out as part of the

Revenue's "guarantee", a promise to calculate the tax of those who got their forms in by September 31. The calculations were supposed to be with taxpayers before the end of January.

Unfortunately, when they arrived, they appeared to charge customers double the amount they owed. An apology letter followed, but customers had to work out, according to an obscure formula, how much they really owed. So much for the guarantee.

Last year, the Inland Revenue's tax statements were even worse - they confused credits with debits and vice versa. Thousands owed refunds by the Revenue were fined for non-payment. Red faces in Somerset House all round, and public apologies - but no one was punished.

It is not as if this is confined to the Revenue. MPs this week slammed the dodgy technology installed at the DSS to administer national insurance. NIRS2, the £100m computer system installed by Andersen Consulting, had failed on no less than 1,919 counts. Over 17 million contributions had not been processed. Payments to private pension schemes had been delayed for months - costing scheme members some £38m.

Compared to the private sector, the public part of the financial world runs wild. But a simple reform would do the trick: interest and surcharges for delays, and a £100 fine for each cock-up.



GOOD BUY PEPS

Alas, soon it will be goodbye to PEPs. However, there's still time to invest up to £9,000 tax-free. Buy from Chelsea and get a really great deal. As well as the PEPs illustrated, we handle all the leading brands. All of which are discounted. So far we have given back over £12 million in discounts.

ISAs also represent a super savings opportunity. Starting April 6, you will be able to invest up to £7,000 tax free in an equity ISA. And of course enjoy the usual Chelsea discounts too!

Chelsea Financial is a no frills, execution only service for the cost conscious investor and is the UK's oldest and best discount broker. As well as the most respected.

So make the most of PEPs before April 5. It is literally an unrepeatable offer. For more information, call us or return the coupon.



CHELSEA FINANCIAL SERVICES
THE ONE STOP INVESTMENT SHOP

Chelsea Financial Services PLC, FREEPOST, 2/1 Harbour Yard,
Chelsea Harbour, London SW10 0YZ. Tel: 0171 351 6022
e-mail: info@chelseafin.co.uk

REGULATED BY THE PERSONAL INVESTMENT AUTHORITY IF IN DOUBT ABOUT YOUR INVESTMENT NEEDS
YOU SHOULD OBTAIN EXPERT ADVICE. THE VALUE OF INVESTMENTS AND THE INCOME FROM THEM CAN FALL AS WELL AS RISE.

To Chelsea Financial Services, FREEPOST, 2/1 Harbour Yard, Chelsea Harbour, London SW10 0YZ.

I would like to know more about Discounted PEPs. ☐ Discounted ISAs. ☐

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

IND 33/199



Safer

than equities. Better returns than Building Societies.
Invest in the new Schroder High Yield Bond PEP.

As the final PEP deadline fast approaches, you may be faced with a key investment question: how can you benefit from the excellent tax breaks available through PEPs without putting your money at undue risk?

The answer could be to invest in the new Schroder High Yield Bond PEP - a PEP that aims for high income returns by investing primarily in a spread of carefully researched UK bonds.

Bond funds are less volatile than equities, but they still offer considerably higher interest than most building societies.

To find out how you can gain a high, tax-free income, call Schroders now on 0800 002 000 (quoting ref: 03435) or return the coupon below to receive your free Schroder High Yield Bond PEP information pack. Alternatively, please contact your financial adviser.

7.0%

Four reasons you should invest in the Schroder High Yield Bond PEP

- Lower risk than equities
- Tax-free income
- Better income returns than leading building societies
- Fixed price offer if you invest before February 12

Complete and return the coupon for your FREE Schroder High Yield Bond PEP information pack to:
Schroders, Customer Services Dept, 03435 FREEPOST LON 7109, London EC4E 4PD.

Mr/Ms/Ms/Miss/Other _____

Forename _____

Surname _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Date of birth _____

Please also send me information on Schroders' ISA range when it is available from March 30 1998. ☐

Sources: 1) Schroders' estimated gross net (ie excluding) yield taking account of administration charges and based on model portfolio as at 31/12/97. 2) Average net (ie excluding) interest rate on recent accounts from three leading UK Building Societies was 3.99% as at 30/01/98. 3) PEPs Accounts UK (the index gross yield for all PEPs was 4.40% from Financial Times as at 30/01/98). Past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance. The value of investments and the income from them can go down as well as up and investors may not get back the amounts originally invested. From 01/04/98 existing PEPs will be held with the same tax advantages as new PEPs but no further contributions can be made to them. As the annual management fee of the Schroder High Yield Bond Fund will be charged weekly to capital, this distributable income of the fund will increase but for capital value may be eroded unless investors' Authority. Member of NIAIF. For investor security, telephone calls to Schroders' Clientcare are monitored. From time to time we may contact you to let you know about our products or services from Schroders and we believe may be of interest to you. If you prefer not to receive such information, please tick here. ☐

Schroders

The name that stands for long-term performance

Quote ref 03435

CALL FREE ON

0800 002 000

www.schroder.co.uk

When you invest in tomorrow, it's easy to become history...

Nasdaq may be the place to spot the next Microsoft, but it's wise to exercise some old-fashioned caution. By Guy Dennis

According to Maurice Saatchi, the guru of advertising, good adverts are like road signs. Road signs name a place, say how far away it is and point people in a specified direction. Likewise, good adverts, he points out, supply minimal information and people follow them.

By this definition, the recent adverts for Nasdaq, the new US stock market, may be good: they certainly supply a name and minimal information. They present Nasdaq as a hi-tech grow-bag for investors' money, using examples of companies such as Microsoft.

However, as with any presentation supplying minimal information, they leave many questions unanswered, and many viewers mystified.

What is Nasdaq? How do you invest in it? Is doing so a good idea? Answers to these questions may not make for exciting ad breaks during *Who Wants to be a Millionaire?*, but if you are attracted by Nasdaq's adverts and want solid investment performance, you should look for answers to these questions, rather than the ones read out by Chris Tarrant.

Named after America's NASDS - the National Association of Securities Dealers, which founded it in 1971 - Nasdaq is one of the most important stock exchanges in the world. It lists shares in over 5,500 companies - more than any other stock market.

"It's a stock exchange that's got a huge mixture of companies in it, ranging from mega technology stocks such as Intel, Microsoft and Cisco, to very small American companies," says Richard Royds, who is the managing director of Mercury unit trusts.

It also has some interesting characteristics. The Nasdaq market is not even in place. Trading takes place electronically between dealers all over the world, although it is facilitated by a mainframe computer in Connecticut.

Yet what really makes Nasdaq stand out are its technology companies - including those mentioned above - among which have been some of the most profitable busi-

nesses in the history of the world. Mr Royds says: "It is not totally technological in any way, but it's got a tremendously high weighting of tech stocks." With the boom in technology it is easy to see why city investment specialists can get excited by Nasdaq.

However, not all of its companies are such glittering success stories. Greg Kerr, a fund manager on the US desk at M and G, says: "Certainly, at the low end of the market, you will get a lot of low-quality companies." While the financial rewards from investing in Nasdaq can be very high, so can the losses.

Still, with the prospect of dynamic hi-tech companies that may boom

company will not usually offer advice to clients on foreign shares. Amanda Davidson, of the financial advisers Holden Meehan, says: "Private investors should not be encouraged to do this. They should look for a US fund - either a unit trust or an investment trust - and do it that way."

The pooled investments reduce risk by spreading investors' money across many companies, and can benefit from the expertise of a fund manager picking shares. However, although experts agree that private investors should, except in special circumstances, choose a collective investment, there is debate about the best type of fund.

may appeal. A more general American fund will invest in the US as a whole, but by doing so it is very likely to include Nasdaq shares.

The debate focuses on whether American funds or technology funds are likely to offer the best performance. Ms Davidson says: "As far as our clients are concerned, unless they've got piles of money we would generally recommend a spread US fund - not one specifically in hi-tech unless that's what really takes their interest specifically."

"A technology fund is going to be the higher risk. Hopefully, that's going to pay off, but that is not always the case."

Mr Kerr warns: "Technology has had a spectacularly strong quarter, but that situation may not be going to last that long."

Yet although the risks may be higher, some experts are still enthusiastic about technology stocks. Mr Royds remarks: "I think that in the technology marketplace, with the speed of change in technology, the opportunities for clever investors are tremendous."

Whatever type of funds you are interested in, it is worth bearing in mind general guidelines for choosing collective investments.

Ms Davidson says: "Have a look and see what its past performance was like; see if the firm it is run by is generally doing well; bear in mind that, if a company only has one good fund, then if its manager leaves that will leave you exposed."

"And you can look at what a fund actually invests in if you want to go into that amount of detail." She advises any investor to consult an independent financial adviser if they have the money to start looking to invest abroad.

Nasdaq is not simply a thoroughbred stud farm for the Microsofts and Intels of the future. Tomorrow's front-runners may be in there somewhere, but finding them is a difficult task that is best left to the professionals.

And "you shouldn't try and gain exposure to Nasdaq for its own sake," warns Greg Kerr. There may be great opportunities waiting to be exploited - but, like Chris Tarrant's television quiz, Nasdaq is not a guaranteed fast track to becoming a millionaire.



With the boom in technology, it's easy to see why Wall Street is so excited by Nasdaq Brian Harris

'There have been some fairly spectacular share price rises, but there's no guarantee that you are going to pick the next Microsoft'

into global corporate giants, you may want a slice of the action, even if it only forms one part of your investment portfolio.

It is possible to invest directly in Nasdaq by buying shares in its companies via a stockbroker. However, for the vast majority of private investors this is a bad idea.

"If you are going to invest directly in overseas equities, you have got to bear in mind that dealing charges tend to be higher because of increased costs," says Richard Hunter, who is the head of dealing services at Nat West Stockbrokers.

He says that investors will need a minimum of £100,000 before they can even start thinking about purchasing shares directly in foreign stockmarkets.

There is also the problem of knowing which companies to invest in. "There have been some fairly spectacular Nasdaq share price rises, and those are the ones that have been focused on by the advertisements, but there's no guarantee whatsoever that you're going to pick the next Microsoft," he adds.

And many stockbrokers, such as Redmayne Bentley, limit themselves to an execution-only service for clients investing overseas - the

There is no tracker fund, one that passively tracks an index of shares, in the UK for Nasdaq, which leaves investors with a choice between a technology fund and an American fund. Neither will invest solely in Nasdaq, yet both are almost certain to include Nasdaq shares in their portfolios.

A technology fund will invest specifically in the kind of hi-tech companies that have come to characterise Nasdaq. So if it is technology that attracts you, these funds



The professionals know best AP

Today self-assessment, tomorrow the virtual world...

I TRUST you have filled in your self-assessment tax return and got it off to the Inland Revenue by now. If you haven't, then - oops! Friday was the last working day of the month, though you might get away with making sure the return is on the taxman's doormat first thing on Monday. If you are one of the large number of people who indulge in this kind of brinkmanship, what can I say? It is your £100 that the Revenue will take away as a fine for late delivery of the return.

For future reference, I direct your attention to the self-assessment website, which explains the dates on the tax

calendar, the records you need to keep and offers answers to common queries. There is also the obligatory screensaver: I am happy to say I do not know anybody who is sad enough to download a screensaver from the Inland Revenue.

It is easy to be confused about what the taxmen want from you. They get confused too. It is also easy to get confused about issues concerning the Internet. Take, for example, last week's launch by Barclays Stockbrokers of an expanded pilot of its trading service. This was translated by one newspaper (which shall remain nameless - oh alright, it was the *Mail on Sunday*) into

the news that Barclays Bank was planning to launch a free Internet access service - something which was news to both Barclays Stockbrokers and Barclays Bank themselves!

Finding your way round the Net also appears to be causing not a little confusion to some readers. One, trying to find Interactive Investor, one of the main personal finance sites, was bemused to find himself looking at Innovative Interfaces, an American specialist in website software for libraries. Why is there this confusion? It is a simple matter of making sure you



INTERNET INVESTOR
ROBIN AMLÔT

know your dot-coms from your dot-co-dot-uks.

On the subject of Interactive Investor, the site has launched a PEP Centre to help the bemused among us find their way round this last-ever PEP-buying season. The first thing you will see on the PEP Centre is a countdown of the number of days remaining to the end of the tax year - 65, as of today.

The PEP Centre is intended to be the first of a series of focused topic sites within the overall Interactive Investor website, which are planned to be launched over the next few months. Similar sites covering other subjects such as

mortgages, healthcare products, personal pensions and banks are promised in the near future.

It offers a range of performance data, news and features. The statistics are provided by Standard & Poor's Micropal, one of the industry's leading number-crunchers. You may view shortlists of PEP funds by performance, sector and geographical focus and review the top 10 performing funds over one, three, five and 10 years.

The site also includes links to a list of PEP providers, offering a brochure request service, and news sourced from the financial services' weekly *Money Marketing*, as well as Interactive

Investor's own in-house news.

However, just a word to the wise; while this may be your "last chance" to buy a PEP that does not make it necessarily the right investment choice for you. With only a couple of months left to run, there is not a lot of point in anyone taking out a monthly PEP saving scheme. Purchasing a PEP right now will really only make sense if you can devote a lump sum to the investment.

Self-assessment:
www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/sa/;
Interactive Investor:
www.iii.co.uk/;
Robin can be reached at:
robinamlot@aol.com

Pensions by phone.

You can pick up the phone and get pension information or advice and even set up a Personal Pension, quickly and without fuss.

Call, 8am-10pm, 7 days a week quoting ref: 288D074

0345 6789 10

or talk to your Independent Financial Adviser.

www.scottishwidows.co.uk



SCOTTISH WIDOWS

Looking good for your pension.

The value of units can go down as well as up. Future bonus rates are not guaranteed. Further details of our Pension Plans are included in the product literature, available from us on request. For your protection, your calls to Scottish Widows may be recorded or monitored and information or advice will only be provided on Scottish Widows products, issued by Scottish Widows' Fund and Life Assurance Society, Regulated by the Personal Investment Authority.

THE INDEPENDENT GUIDE TO FLEXIBLE MORTGAGES

by Nic Cicutti

Sponsored by



RING 0800 550 551

Or send to: Independent Guide to Flexible Mortgages First Active Financial
plc, Sir William Atkins House, Ashley Avenue, Epsom, Surrey KT18 5ASMr/Mrs/Miss/Ms
Address

Postcode Tel no. (inc code)

Data protection notice: please tick the box if you do not wish to receive
information about products or services from First Active Group

DIRECT LINE RATES

PERSONAL LOAN RATES

Direct Line Personal Loans

FROM 9.9% APR

MORTGAGE RATE

Direct Line Standard Variable Mortgage Rate

VARIABLE RATE APR (variable)

6.89%* 7.1%*

SAVINGS RATES

Direct Line Direct Access Account

UP TO 6.15% GROSS/AER*

Rates correct as 29th January 1999. *Rate effect from 1st February 1999.

0181 680 9966

PERSONAL LOANS

0181 649 9099

MORTGAGES

0181 667 1121

SAVINGS

Call us now quoting ref. NINDB22

For mortgages, security required. Written quotations on request. Subject to status.

Mortgages and personal loans available in England, Scotland and Wales.

YOUR HOME IS AT RISK IF YOU DO NOT KEEP UP REPAYMENTS

ON A MORTGAGE OR OTHER LOAN SECURED ON IT.

The above figures are indicative only. The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

The actual rate of interest will be determined by the lender.

ASK ANY stockbroker where to put your money and you will be told that equities are the best investment. They may go up and down according to the vagaries of the market, but over any five-year period they will have outperformed alternatives such as cash or bonds.

Until now. According to statistics to be released, British Government Securities - UK bonds to the cognoscenti - have outperformed ordinary shares this decade.

The source of this revelation is the *Equity/Gilt Study* published yearly by Barclays. It traces the performance of the stock market, gilts and building society deposits all the way to 1918. The survey that brings us up to the end of 1998 is expected to show that British Government stocks put on a late spurt last year, and edged their way to the top of the table for the returns achieved during the 1990s.

This is really quite a remarkable achievement. Yet I am sure it is true. Gilts have performed remarkably well recently. Confounding expectations, yields on long-dated British Government stocks are now below those achievable in America or Germany. US 30-year bonds return 5.1 per cent, German 4.5 per cent, and here in the UK just 4.2 per cent.

Why has it happened? It is not just that inflation has fallen and stayed down - that has happened elsewhere too. In the UK there has been unprecedented demand for gilts by pension funds. This Government, too, has been chary of increasing borrowing, so over recent years demand has outstripped supply. Can it continue? It is hard to see that it will, but then who would have predicted yields so low when we entered the 1990s.

This may have been good news for some investors, but it does have severe implications elsewhere. It is an interesting twist to realise that the latest potential scandal to hit the financial



BRIAN TORAL

Government stocks put on a spurt last year, and edged their way to the top of the returns' table

services industry - guaranteed annuity rates on certain personal pension products - would not have occurred had gilts not risen so much recently. Annuity rates depend upon the returns available in the Government securities market. With these now so low, promises made years ago to deliver a particular income at retirement can no longer be met other than by diverting additional funds to make up the shortfall.

The message must be that most of the fun in this market has already taken place, but you need to plan early and fund well to enjoy retirement. Living off capital is all very well, but markets fluctuate and you may need income at a time when you do not want to sell.

Meantime, bargains are there to be had. Some fund managers recognise this, launching bond funds offering spectacular yields. Be careful, though. High yields mean higher risk, although in many cases the yield premium seems out of all proportion to the attendant risk.

Buy them if you will for an income that will surely be greater than that which you can expect from gilts or building society deposits - however, treat any capital gains as an unexpected bonus.

Brian Toral is head of the Asset Management Division of Greig Middleton & Co

BEST MORTGAGES

	Telephone number	% Rate and period	Max LTV %	Fee	Incentive	
MORTGAGES	FIXED RATES (Interest rate up to 10 years)	Barclays BS	0800 536350	4.95% for 2 years	95%	£295
Barclays BS	0191 2442488	5.15% to 31.3.02	95%	£245	Free U for 1 year. Adv up to 90% on MRP	1st 2 years: 180 days interest-free
First Active	0121 500404	5.25% to 30.04.04	95%	£295	Advances up to 95% - no MRP	To 31.3.02: 5% of rate repaid
FIXED RATES (Interest rate up to 10 years)	FIXED RATES (Interest rate up to 10 years)	Barclays BS	0800 536350	3.45% to 1.3.01	95%	£295
Barclays BS	0800 536350	4.95% for 3 years	95%	£295	Free ASU for 6 months. Adv up to 90% on MRP	1st 5 years: 5% of rate repaid
First Active	0800 133149	5.25% to 1.3.03	95%	£295	Free of £295 refunded	To 31.3.04: 4.5% of rate repaid
CAPPED RATES	CAPPED RATES	Barclays BS	0800 223221	4.95% to 1.3.01	95%	£295
Barclays BS	0800 223221	4.95% for 3 years	95%	£295	Holiday weather - rate £100	1st 5 yrs: 5% of rate repaid
First Active	0800 133149	5.05% for 4 years	95%	£295	Advances up to 90% - no MRP	1st 5 years: 5% of rate repaid
FIRST TIME BUYERS (Variable rates capped)	FIRST TIME BUYERS (Variable rates capped)	Country BS	0800 365622	3.95% to 31.3.01	95%	£295
Country BS	0800 365622	4.75% for 3 years	95%	£295	Free rate, £300 rebate up to 90% on MRP	1st 5 years: 5% of rate repaid
First Active	0800 365622	5.45% for 5 years	95%	£295	Refund on valuation fee, no MRP	To 31.3.04: 1.8125% of rate repaid
VARIABLE DISCOUNTED RATES	VARIABLE DISCOUNTED RATES	Barclays BS	0800 536350	3.70% to 1.3.01	95%	£295
Barclays BS	0800 536350	4.70% for 3 years	95%	£295	£300 cash rebate	1st 5 years: 5% of rate repaid
First Active	01332 641000	5.95% for 5 years	95%	£125	£250 rebate, free refunded & up to 90% - no MRP	1st 5 yrs: 5% of rate repaid

BEST BORROWING RATES

PERSONAL LOANS										BEST SAVINGS RATES									
UNSECURED										INSTANT ACCESS									
Telephone	APR %	Fixed monthly payments on £5K over 3 yrs	With insurance	Without insurance	Telephone	Account	Interest rate	APR %	Interest rate	Telephone	Account	Interest rate	APR %	Interest rate					
Barclays BS	0345 421421	9.5% H	£182.37	£165.44	Barclays BS	0800 536350	Instant Access	5.25%	£100	Barclays BS	0800 536350	Instant Access	5.25%	£100					
First Active	0800 1339856	11.5%	£183.40	£164.81	First Active	0800 133149	Instant Access	5.25%	£100	First Active	0800 133149	Instant Access	5.25%	£100					
First Active	0181 680 9966	12.25%	£182.34	£165.22	First Active	0800 133149	Instant Access	5.25%	£100	First Active	0800 133149	Instant Access	5.25%	£100					
OVERDRAFTS	OVERDRAFTS	Barclays BS	0800 536350	Access	0.95%	12.00%	2.00%	29.2%	29.2%	NO NOTICE POSTAL ACCOUNTS									
Barclays BS	0800 536350	Access	0.95%	12.00%	2.00%	29.2%	29.2%	29.2%	29.2%										
First Active	0800 133149	Access	0.97%	12.25%	2.10%	29.3%	29.3%	29.3%	29.3%										
First Active	0800 133149	Bank	1.00%	13.00%	2.25%	31.1%	31.1%	31.1%	31.1%	NOTICE ACCOUNTS & BONDS									
Barclays BS	0800 536350	Instant Access	5.25%	£100	4.75%	£100	4.75%	£100	4.75%										
First Active	0800 133149	Instant Access	5.25%	£100	4.75%	£100	4.75%	£100	4.75%										
First Active	0800 133149	Instant Access	5.25%	£100	4.75%	£100	4.75%	£100	4.75%										

CREDIT CARDS										CHEQUE ACCOUNTS									
Telephone	Card Type	Rate	APR %	Annual fee	Min. fee	Telephone	Account	Interest rate	APR %	Interest rate	Telephone	Account	Interest rate	APR %	Interest rate				
Barclays BS	0800 100000	Advantage Visa	4.95%	£9.99	Nil	0 days	Barclays BS	0800 536350	Instant Access	5.25%	£100	Barclays BS	0800 536350	Instant Access	5.25%	£100			
First Active	0800 133149	Mastercard Visa	5.95%	£9.99	Nil	56 days	First Active	0800 133149	Instant Access	5.25%	£100	First Active	0800 133149	Instant Access	5.25%	£100			
First Active	0800 133149	Visa	5.95%	£9.99	Nil	36 days	First Active	0800 133149	Instant Access	5.25%	£100	First Active	0800 133149	Instant Access	5.25%	£100			
GOLD CARDS	GOLD CARDS	Barclays BS	0800 100000	Adv Gold Visa	4.95%	£50.00	£10	0 days	£22K	FIXED RATE BONDS									
Barclays BS	0800 100000	Adv Gold Visa	4.95%	£50.00	£10	0 days	£22K	£22K	£22K										
First Active	0800 133149	Gold Visa	5.95%	£50.00	£10	48 days	£22K	£22K	£22K										
First Active	0800 133149	Gold Visa	5.95%	£50.00	£10	56 days	£22K	£22K	£22K										

STORE CARDS										FIRST TESSAS									
Telephone	Payment by direct debit	% per month	APR %	Payment by other methods	% per month	APR %	Telephone	Account	Interest rate	APR %	Interest rate	Telephone	Account	Interest rate	APR %	Interest rate			
John Lewis	Visa store	1.9%	23.0%	1.9%	23.0%	12.0%	Barclays BS	0800 536350	First Tessa	5.10%	£100	Barclays BS	0800 536350	First Tessa	5.10%	£100			
Morris & Sons	Visa store	1.9%	23.0%	1.9%	23.0%	12.0%	First Active	0800 133149	First Tessa	5.10%	£100	First Active	0800 133149	First Tessa	5.10%	£100			
Boys	Visa store	1.9%	23.0%	1.9%	23.0%	12.0%	First Active	0800 133149	First Tessa	5.10%	£100	First Active	0800 133149	First Tessa	5.10%	£100			

FOLLOW-ON TESSAS										GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS (net)									
Telephone	Account	Interest rate	APR %	Interest rate	Telephone	Account	Interest rate	APR %	Interest rate	Telephone	Account	Interest rate	APR %	Interest rate					
Barclays BS	0800 536350	Follow-on Tessa	5.10%	£100	Barclays BS	0800 536350	Follow-on Tessa	5.10%	£100	Barclays BS	0800 536350	Follow-on Tessa	5.10%	£100					
First Active	0800 133149	Follow-on Tessa	5.10%	£100	First Active	0800 133149	Follow-on Tessa	5.10%	£100	First Active	0800 133149	Follow-on Tessa	5.10%	£100					
First Active	0800 133149	Follow-on Tessa	5.10%	£100	First Active	0800 133149	Follow-on Tessa	5.10%	£100	First Active	0800 133149	Follow-on Tessa	5.10%	£100					

OFFSHORE ACCOUNTS (gross)										BEST BORROWING RATES									
Telephone	Account	Interest rate	APR %	Interest rate	Telephone	Account	Interest rate	APR %	Interest rate	Telephone	Account	Interest rate	APR %	Interest rate					
Barclays BS	0800 536350	Offshore Account	5.10%	£100	Barclays BS	0800 536350	Offshore Account	5.10%	£100	Barclays BS	0800 536350	Offshore Account	5.10%	£100					
First Active	0800 133149	Offshore Account	5.10%	£100	First Active	0800 133149	Offshore Account	5.10%	£100	First Active	0800 133149	Offshore Account	5.10%	£100					
First Active	0800 133149	Offshore Account	5.10%	£100	First Active	0800 133149	Offshore Account	5.10%	£100	First Active	0800 133149	Offshore Account	5.10%	£100					

Lenders have to face reality and start offering home loans at a decent cost to suit customers

Security is what we want



JONATHAN DAVIS
It is not the cost of a house, but the cost of the finance that should top the agenda

It may be just a straw in the wind, but with any luck this week's hint from Northern Rock that it is considering changing the way it funds its mortgage lending will prove to be an important (and overdue) watershed in the cost of owning a home in this country.

The building society (soon to convert to a bank) says that it is looking at ways to fund its lending to home owners by issuing securities to investors, rather than relying on the traditional building society source, which is the deposit accounts of its savers. The technique of funding loans with securities backed by a lender's mortgage book is widespread in the United States, but has been slow to reach this country, despite many predictions that it was on the way.

The argument for switching to mortgage-backed securities as a source of finance is that it should enable lenders such as Northern Rock to borrow money for home loans more cheaply than they can raise money at the moment. This in turn will allow them to compete more effectively, either by taking market share from other lenders with more expensive sources of finance, or by increasing their profit margins on home loans.

The immediate trigger for Northern Rock's move, apart from its impending demutualisation, seems to be the entry of new competitors in the market for retail savings. Companies such as the Prudential with its EGG account, and Standard Life, are

offering higher rates on savings accounts than the banks or building societies reckon they can afford.

If this turns out to be the start of a trend, which is not unlikely, it can only be good news for borrowers. The sad truth is that, while we in Britain spend an inordinate amount of time fretting over which type of mortgage to have, and what is happening to house prices, we tend to lose sight of the fact that the real problem we face in a low inflation environment is how expensive and inflexible our mortgage finance is.

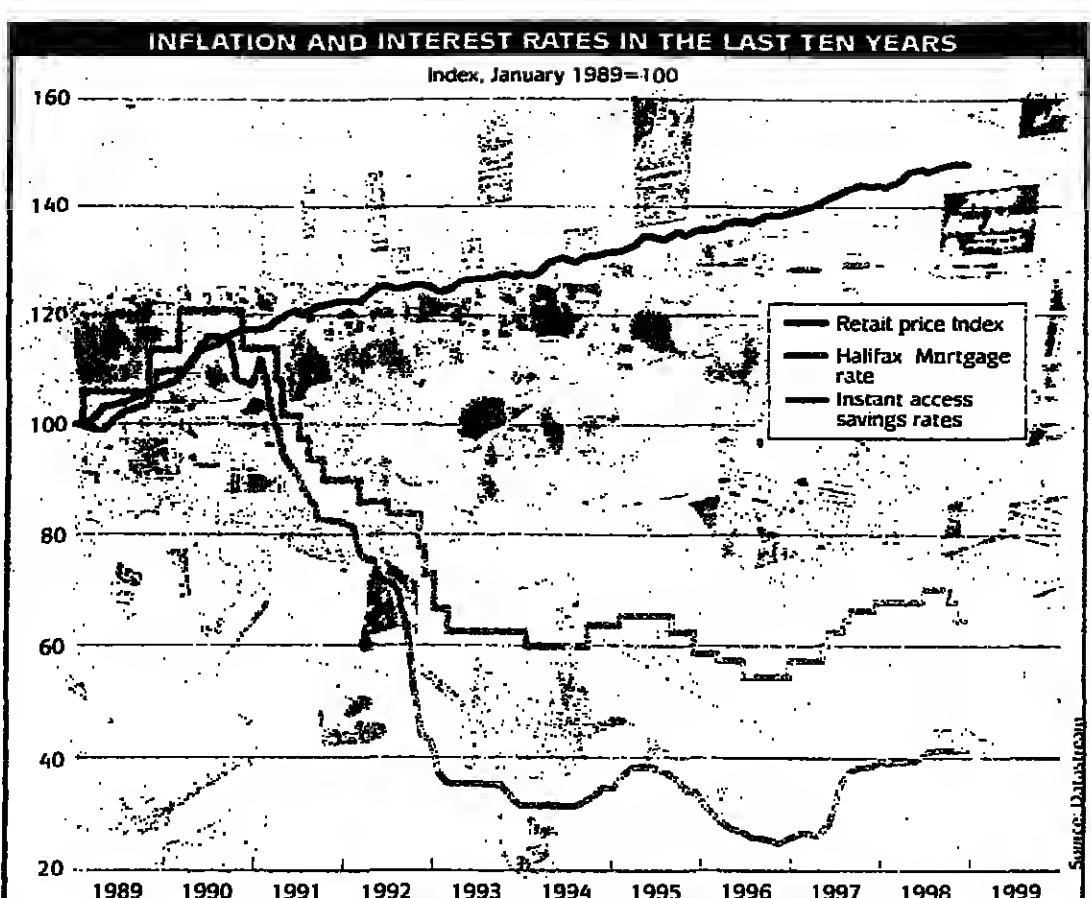
Compared to other countries in Europe, which have long enjoyed low-cost, long-term, fixed-rate mortgages, and the US, where securitisation of home loans is widespread, the price we pay for our home loans remains, in general, extravagantly high, and the system by which we obtain them excessively inflexible.

When you consider that inflation is now firmly entrenched at around 2 per cent per annum, the fact that many home owners are still paying 8 per cent or so for their mortgages is little short of extraordinary. A real (inflation-adjusted) rate of interest of 6 per cent is very high for long-term lending which is fully secured on property values (and that's before the fact that many lenders require you to pay the cost of insuring that such security might not be enough).

In fact, the business of mortgage lending in this country has been so profitable for most of the last 15 years, that it is no surprise that new lenders keep falling over themselves to try and get into the market. It is true that increased competition is belatedly having some impact on the cost of home loans, as anyone who has enjoyed a cashback or cut price mortgage offer in the last three years will testify.

For the first time in many years, canny buyers and homeowners who switch their lenders have recently had the chance to enjoy some terrific mortgage bargains. But because existing borrowers seem content to cross-subsidise the new business their lender is wooing with its cut-price offers, overall profit margins in the business still remain high.

It seems that most existing borrowers are either too lazy, or perhaps too diffident, to work out that they should be able to take advantage of these new market conditions to strike a better deal for themselves.



Anyone who opted for a fixed rate mortgage is discovering that they are paying a high premium for the insurance of knowing their repayment obligations in advance. Needless to say, the lenders are doing all they can to lock in those who take advantage of new cheap deals with hefty redemption penalties and similar loyalty devices.

In the days when house prices were soaring, and the government dispensed hefty tax breaks for house purchase, the need to worry about the cost of a mortgage was limited. But now that world has gone, and the scope for consumers to exercise their muscle is much increased. But they still seem reluctant to take

The price of home loans remains extravagantly high and the system excessively inflexible

full advantage of the opportunity. It is not the cost of a house, but the cost of the finance, which should top consumers' agendas.

Given the other strange things that have gone on in the mortgage market over the years (including the remarkable resilience of the commission-led endowment mortgage), week, is that consumer pressure is finally starting to assert itself, and will eventually do the job before heavy handed government regulators get involved. Securitising mortgage loans, if it ever happens, would certainly be another welcome step down the path towards a healthy competitive market in mortgages. It suggests that lenders are finally being forced to accept the new reality and do all they can to cut their funding costs.

Theory suggests that a big mortgage lender with access to securitised finance could cut the margin on mortgage lending to 1 per cent or less. This compares with the 1.4 per cent typically required by banks funding their loans in the money markets, and the 2 per cent which lenders traditionally charge for the privilege of helping us buy our homes. Securitisation works in the United States, and if it doesn't come to this country soon, we really should start asking ourselves why.

Ways to raise your interest

Make your money work harder for you. By Iain Morse

HEARD THE one about a man who kept £10,000 in his current account? No? You haven't missed much in the way of interest. After deducting tax, charges and inflation, the real value of cash in most current accounts is falling.

If you doubt this, then figure it out for yourself. Put £10,000 into Abbey National's Instant Plus Account, paying monthly interest of just 1 per cent gross. After deducting 20 per cent basic rate income tax, the net annual return on this account would be £30.

The underlying rate of inflation - excluding house prices - fell to 2.5 per cent in August. Apply this over 12 months, add net interest, and the real value of cash would be around £9,830. On these figures, basic rate taxpayers need gross returns of at least 3.1 per cent just to level peg with inflation.

One way to get higher interest is by putting your cash in a "variable term account". Check on whether interest is credited to the account on a monthly basis.

As an example, take Bradford & Bingley's Bonus 120 account, which pays annual interest of 7.4 gross, and a lower 7.2 per cent if paying monthly on a deposit of £10,000. There are penalties for early withdrawal.

But Jeremy Peat, chief accountant of the Royal Bank of Scotland warns: "Interest rates could go lower, faster, than has yet been factored in by the markets." If you're relying on interest to supplement income, looking at fixed rate accounts seems a sensible precaution.

Northern Rock has some of the best deals on offer - year fixed-rate bonds; £10,000 will lock into a fixed gross rate of 7.05 per cent paid monthly. Non-taxpayers investing this amount receive £58.75 a

month, low rate taxpayers £47 a month or 5.64 per cent net, and high rate payers, £35.35 a month, or 4.18 per cent net.

But caution is needed. Monthly interest bonds pay less - between 0.2 and 0.5 per cent - than quarterly or annual bonds. No early access to capital is allowed.

Bonds of this kind are available from banks and building societies. Some insurance companies offer "guaranteed income bonds" (GIB's).

The big drawback of GIB's is that they only pay "income" net of basic rate tax. This is

If you're relying on interest to boost income, looking at fixed rates is a wise precaution

not reclaimable even by non-taxpayers. Investing £10,000 for one year, the best net return comes from GE Financial Assurance, paying 5.16 per cent monthly. Over three and four years Hambro Assured offers respective rates of 4.90 and 5.10.

Some local authorities issue fixed-rate term bonds. These are similar to fixed-rate bonds, with no early access. Over one year, Torfaen BC comes top, paying 6.25 gross on a six-monthly basis, on deposits of £1,000 or more.

You can also try "money market time deposits". The current best deal comes from Anglo Irish Bankcorp, offering a fixed rate of 6.5 per cent over 12 months on deposits of £50,000 or more.

Remember the effect of inflation on your capital. At 2.5 per cent, inflation would reduce the value of £10,000 to just £8,750 over five years.

b² Limited is an Appointed Representative of Barclays Funds Limited (BFL) and only offers their unit trusts. BFL is regulated by HMRC and the Personal Investment Authority. The value of your Market Track 350 PEP and the income from it can go down as well as up. You may not get back all the money you invest. You can invest in a PEP until the 5 April 1999 when the government will introduce the tax advantageous Individual Savings Account (ISAs). PEPs held at 5 April will remain as stand alone investments with the same tax advantages as ISAs. CAT standards do not imply performance guarantees or appropriateness for investors. You can not rely on past performance to predict how your investments will perform in the future. Future performance will be reduced because of the changed basis of taxation introduced by the Finance Act 1997. Performance figures collected over 10 years to 1 January 1998 using Standard & Poor's Microcap based on the FTSE 350 index. All calculations are based on a buying to selling basis without income. For your security calls are recorded.

350 reasons for choosing the new b² PEP.

Unlike any other PEP, the new b² Market Track 350 tracks the UK's top 350 companies. This brings you the performance of blue-chip giants together with the potential of dynamic medium-sized companies.

b² also differs from all other PEP providers in that our PEPs already meet the Government's new CAT standards for ISAs. So you just pay a total of 1% in annual fees and absolutely no other charges.

The fact is, this new PEP from b² - which is backed by Barclays - would have given you 203% growth over the last 10 years if it had been available.

So don't miss the PEP deadline of April 5th. Call now for a jargon-free information pack, quoting B0615.

The new Market Track 350 PEP from b².



0800 62 62 62

For a pack call us, or send coupon to b², Freeport SE44934, Kingston-Upon-Thames, KT2 6BR.

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____

POSTCODE _____ TELEPHONE _____

MARKET TRACK 350 PEP B0615

Thought for the day

So many PEPs.
So little time.
So make a little time for an IFA.

0117 971 1177

Please quote the reference code in the coupon.

Time runs out for PEPs at the end of this tax year. After that, they'll be replaced by the Government's new Individual Savings Account - ISA for short. So sit down with an Independent Financial Adviser and make sure your last PEP is the right one for you. Call the number above now for your free consultation voucher. Because there's no time like the present.



You'd be better off with an IFA

Yes please, I think I'd like to know more about talking to an IFA. Please send me my information pack, the names of three local IFAs and a voucher for my half hour free consultation. I understand that no-one will call me as a result of filling in this coupon. The address is: IFAP Limited, 17-19 Emory Road, Bristlington, Bristol, BS4 5PP

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____

POSTCODE _____ TELEPHONE _____

THIS ADVERTISEMENT APPEARS IN REMAINING 146 BRITAIN'S INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL ADVISERS AND HAS BEEN APPROVED BY A PANEL OF THREE LOCAL IFAs AND A VOUCHER FOR MY HALF HOUR FREE CONSULTATION. I UNDERSTAND THAT NO-ONE WILL CALL ME AS A RESULT OF FILLING IN THIS COUPON. THE ADDRESS IS: IFAP LIMITED, 17-19 EMORY ROAD, BRISTLINGTON, BRISTOL, BS4 5PP. OVERSEAS INVESTMENTS MAY BE MADE AFTER APRIL 1999. THE VALUE OF YOUR SAVINGS AND ELIGIBILITY TO INVEST IN A PEP IN ISA WILL DEPEND UPON A RANGE OF POTENTIAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND ALL THE RULES MAY CHANGE IN THE FUTURE.

Plug those tax leaks now

Ten top tips on tax saving from the people who know how it's done. By Andy Couchman

In this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes." Benjamin Franklin's famous comment is as true today as it was 200 years ago but, while most of us are happy to pay our taxes, few of us want to pay any more than we have to.

The essence of saving tax is, for most people, a question of concentrating on simple, well-proven ideas, rather than setting up complex tax mitigation schemes. Not everyone wants to, or can afford to, set up offshore trusts. Indeed, it is important not to get involved in tax evasion – which is illegal – and even tax avoidance, using legal tax loopholes to minimise tax, is distasteful to many.

To find out how best to minimise tax, we consulted two firms of accountants and two guides to taxation. Here, then, are *The Independent's* top 10 tax tips:

■ A good starting point from the *Allied Dunbar Tax Handbook*, edited by Tony Foreman and sponsored by accountants Pannell Kerr Forster, is to take your tax affairs seriously, to read up about self-assessment, and not to be fooled by "G&T tax advice". Just because a mate down the pub claims to pay no tax does not mean that they do not, or that their activities are legal. Make sure that you keep good records. That will also make it easier for you or your accountant to sort out your tax affairs.

■ In many families, one spouse pays less tax than the other does. So, if your spouse pays less tax than you do, consider transferring assets to them. This works especially well if one partner is a higher rate taxpayer and currently holds most or all of the family's investments. Janice Payne of London-based Kings Mill Tax Practice, says this can help avoid paying higher rate tax on investment income. The gift has to be without reservation – if your partner decides to cash the money and go on a spree they are free to do so.

■ People whose homes are big enough can receive tax-free rent up to £4,250 under the Rent a Room rules. The home needs to be your main or only residence at some time during the letting and the room must be furnished says William Hinton, of chartered accountants William Hinton & Partners in Stow-on-the-Wold.

■ If you have a business that gen-



Get organised to sort out your tax affairs, and stop your money going down the drain

Tony Buckingham

erates more profits than you want to spend, consider incorporating it, writes tax consultant Sonia Gable in her book *Planning for Capital Gains Tax*. There are two reasons to do so; first, a limited company is likely to pay a lower rate of tax than you do, and second, there are CGT advantages available through companies that individuals do not have.

■ For the self-employed, look at investing as much as you can into a personal pension. You can start getting your hands on pensions income from age 50 – lower if you are in a profession such as sport or show business, says Janice Payne.

■ Another idea from William Hinton is to take advantage of available tax breaks. Most people are familiar with PEPs and with Tassas, but a

useful tip, if the recession bites and your business is VAT-registered, is that if you can write off had debts after six months you can reclaim the VAT paid.

■ If you think that you are self-employed, make sure that the Revenue does too, advises the *Tax Handbook*. Self-employed workers can offset more expenses against tax than employees. The rules are especially complex if you work "onsite" for someone else, so you should seek professional advice.

■ If you have held assets for less than 10 years, consider delaying realising gains where the qualifying holding period is just short of a full number of years, says Sonia Gable. That is because the new taper relief for Capital Gains Tax, works on

how many full years you have held the asset for.

■ Here's a simple way to save at least £100 – make sure that you have submitted your self assessment tax return and paid your tax for 1997/98 by 31 January.

■ Do not throw anything away. The *Tax Handbook* advises that the Revenue's policy is to "process now, check later". It reserves the right to open an enquiry into your 1997/98 tax return until 1 February 2000 – and it does not have to give a justification for doing so. How strong would your case be if you had thrown away your tax records before then?

■ If your tax affairs are at all complex, it will probably pay you to employ an accountant or tax adviser –

but make sure that they employ properly qualified staff, and specialise in the tax affairs of people like you. If you want to do it yourself, a good tax guide is a must. *The Allied Dunbar Tax Handbook* is one of the best established, while *Taxbriefs' Planning for Capital Gains Tax* is a new guide to this complex tax.

But do not leave it too long to get your tax affairs in order. The time to plan and to set aside the money to pay your tax bill is now.

The Kings Mill Tax Practice, 0181 649 8889; *William Hinton & Partners*, 01451 831 130; *Allied Dunbar Tax Handbook*, price £25.99 from book-sellers; *Planning for Capital Gains Tax*, price £47 from *Taxbriefs* on 0171 250 0967

Red faces at the Revenue

Some 800,000 incorrect tax demands have gone out. By Andrew Verity

AS TOMORROW'S deadline looms for getting tax returns to the tax office, a spate of horror stories is emerging about an Inland Revenue mistake that led hundreds of thousands of people to be sent the wrong tax demands.

The Revenue has admitted that more than 800,000 taxpayers were issued with incorrect tax demands on 27 December. The demands, also known as assessments, appeared to require them to pay double the amount they owed by 31 January.

Ironically, the blunder was caused by an attempt to make it clearer to taxpayers how much they owed. The tax assessments set out the payments owing for the year 1998/99, rather than breaking them up into instalments. But in doing so, they failed to make it obvious that only half the amount was due for payment by the end of January.

The Revenue sent out a letter of apology soon after the blunder came to light, telling taxpayers that the assessment sent out in December might have been calculated by the wrong formula. The farce was compounded when the Revenue was forced to send out further letters of apology making it clear that only some – not all – of the assessments were wrong.

Tax agents are demanding that the Inland Revenue show flexibility about the demands and promises not to charge interest to taxpayers affected by the mistake.

The blunder is the latest in a series caused by the Revenue's new self-assessment system. At the same time a year ago, the Revenue's spanking new computer system issued upwards of 4 million tax demands. Tens of thousands of them incorporated a rather embarrassing mistake: the system had mistaken debits for credits – and vice versa.

The assessments showed refunds due to people who owed tax, and charged people who were owed refunds.

The public's experience of the new system has exposed further absurdities.

Andrea Craig, a 39-year-old health care consultant from north London, was particularly conscientious when she discovered a Revenue error. Last year her office, London Provincial 10 in Gateshead, overlooked a line in her tax return specifying share options due to her. They issued her with a refund.

Knowing that she owed tax, Andrea contacted London Provincial 10, who admitted their error and said they would send her an amended tax demand before 31 January (so that she could pay in time).

Unfortunately, Andrea became fully self-employed shortly afterwards and her papers were sent to a King's Cross office. No amended demand was forthcoming.

"The next thing I knew was in February, when they sent me a new assessment saying I owed them money plus interest because I was overdue," she says. She filled out an appeal form, only to find herself called up by a Revenue official telling her she had "no reasonable grounds for appeal". Only months later, after writing to three senior managers and spending hours on the phone, did Andrea get an apology.

Last week we published an article on tax returns by Sara Williams along with extracts from her book, *The Lloyd's Bank Tax Guide*. The guide is available to readers of *The Independent* at a reduced price of £5 inc p&p (normal retail price, £7.99). To take advantage of the offer, please send a cheque for £5 to Independent Reader Offer, Profile Books, 58a Hatton Garden, London EC1N 8LX

EUROPEAN PEP

Star Performer. Don't miss the Grand Finale.

17.2%
average returns since launch

For PEPs, the curtain comes down in April 1999. So if you want to take advantage of one of the best performers available, time's running out.

Our European PEP has outperformed 97% of the competition over the last

5 years. It invests in a trust that has been 'AAA' rated in 6 out of the last 7 years*, and had it been available as a PEP when launched, would have produced returns of 17.2% – free from UK Income Tax and Capital Gains Tax.

Whether you want to make a new investment, or transfer an existing PEP, make sure you don't miss the chance to enjoy our European PEP performance – while you still can.

For further details, return the coupon or call
0345 6789 10
Quote reference no. 448DB4

SCOTTISH WIDOWS

www.scottishwidows.co.uk

2% discount on new lump sums and transfers before 5 April 1999.

Please return to Scottish Widows, Direct Sales, PO Box 17036, FREEPOST SC03744, Edinburgh EH3 0BR.

EUROPEAN PEP

Surname (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms) _____ First Name(s) _____
Address _____
Postcode _____
Telephone No. Work _____ Home _____ Date of Birth _____

We will never make your name and address available to other organisations. However, we will occasionally tell you more about our products and services which we believe will be of interest to you. If you would prefer not to receive this information, please tick this box. ☐ Reference No. 448DB4

*Source: Standard & Poor's Fund Research 1992-1998. Based on £6,000 lump sum, 14.28% to 10.98% offer to bid prices, gross income re-invested, assuming our European PEP had been available as a PEP. Over the five years to 1 October 1998, the same investment would have provided an average annual growth rate of 12.8%. Past performance is not necessarily a guide to the future. The value of units and the income therefrom is not guaranteed. Exchange rate changes may cause the value of any overseas investment to go down as well as up. The tax position of PEPs will change in April 1999. For your protection calls may be recorded or monitored. Issued by Scottish Widows Investment Management Limited. Regulated by the Personal Investment Authority and FSA.

PROPERTY



'You've got to look at your house as others see it which is hard if you've lived there for some time. But you wouldn't turn up for an interview wearing old jeans and trainers.'

PAGE 11

Top notch PEPs...at rock bottom rates



Investors may save up to £300 on a £6000 PEP when they send their application via PEPDIRECT.

We charge just one flat fee of £25 and we rebate any initial commission* back to you.

We can often negotiate reductions in your PEP's initial charges too.

In the first four months of 1998 alone, we saved investors over £2 million in returned commissions and discounted charges. For a free brochure and guide, call Freephone

0800 413186
Open seven days a week

PEPDIRECT
AT TQ DIRECT CHOICE
The UK's LARGEST Flat-Fee PEP Provider**

PEPDIRECT and TQ DIRECT CHOICE are registered dealing names of TQ Direct plc, who are Independent Financial Advisers regulated by the Financial Services Authority. For details of our services and the risks involved, please see our prospectus. *These rates are for new PEPs only. **First Quarter 1998

The PEPDIRECT Team, TQ Direct plc, FREEPOST WV316, St Mark's, Chapel Ash, Wolverhampton, West Midlands WV3 0TZ
E-MAIL: tqdirect@tqdirect.co.uk

PERSONAL PENSIONS

Do you need a pension plan that's ready for life's unexpected turns?

No matter how carefully you plan, life has a habit of presenting us all with unexpected twists and turns. Early retirement; a change of career; children. All these can change your circumstances, so you need a pension plan which is flexible enough to let you cope with any changes – without penalty!

That is why you should consider an Equitable Pension Plan, which:

- Lets you vary contributions – without penalty.
- Lets you retire earlier than planned – without penalty.
- Provides a full return of fund in the event of death before retirement.

The Equitable Life does not pay commission to third parties for the introduction of new business. So, if you'd like to know more, call us direct on (0990) 38 48 58 or send off the coupon below for further information by post and by telephone.

www.equitable.co.uk

For your security your telephone call may be recorded. Information/advice will only be given on Equitable group products regulated by the Personal Investment Authority.

THE EQUITABLE LIFE, FREEPOST, WALTON STREET, AYLESBURY, BUCKINGHAM, HP21 7BR
To: The Equitable Life, FREEPOST, Walton Street, Aylesbury, Bucks HP21 7BR
I would welcome details on The Equitable's pension plans. I am self-employed ☐ I am employed and not eligible to join a company pension scheme ☐

NAME (Mr/Mrs/Ms) _____

ADDRESS _____

Tel: (Office) _____

Tel: (Home) _____

Date of Birth _____

Postcode _____

The Equitable Life

You profit from our principles

© 1998 Equitable Life Assurance Society of London Ltd. All rights reserved. The Equitable Life Assurance Society of London Ltd. is a company registered in England. No part of this publication may be reproduced without the prior written permission of the Equitable Life Assurance Society of London Ltd.

Flexible mortgages are a hit with punters and a miss for old-style lenders. By Teresa Hunter

Let's all be flexible

The traditional 25-year mortgage has been an endangered species for some time, following radical changes to our lifestyles. But its death-knell was finally sounded this week when a new entrant to the mortgage market pulled the rug out from under the rest of the industry.

In just three weeks, Standard Life's Flexstyle Flexibility mortgage has attracted applications worth £500m, nearly half the entire monthly lending of all banks and building societies put together, exploding a few key concepts that the major lenders have resolutely clung to.

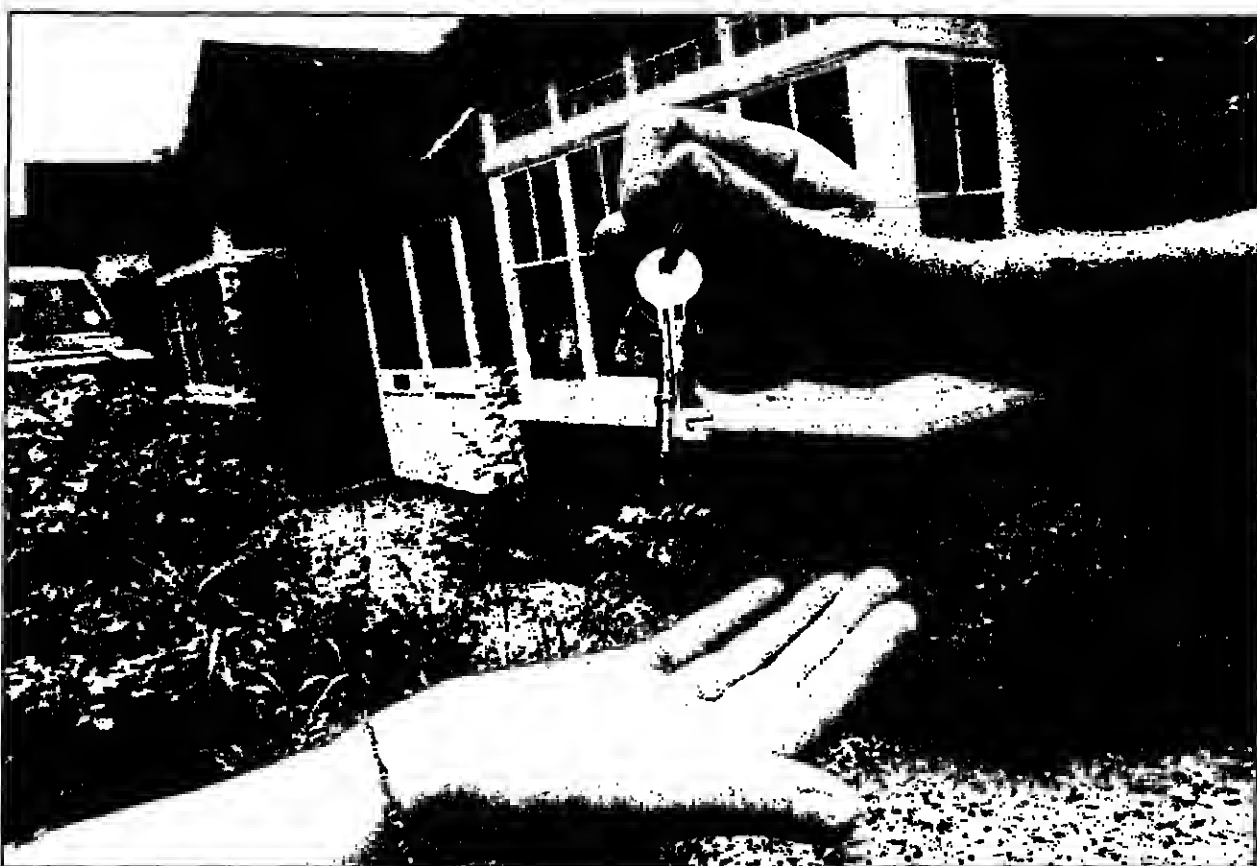
The first of these concerns their rigid defence of the way interest is calculated, in the face of consumers' complaints that they are being systematically overcharged. The second is that the mortgages they offer meet customers' needs for flexibility. If only a fraction of the applications being processed by Standard Life mature into loans, the mortgage market will never be the same again.

Its impact was underlined yesterday when Britain's two biggest mortgage lenders, the Halifax and the Abbey National, both disclosed that they are actively developing a similar product, though the Halifax has some reservations. The Nationwide is also examining the scope for further flexibility.

The Woolwich, the first of Britain's mainstream lenders to launch a flexible mortgage, revealed that this is now the first choice of nearly half of all borrowers. The Alliance & Leicester, which recently launched its own flexible mortgage, said it had been "overwhelmed" by the response.

The reason these mortgages are popular is because they allow borrowers to overpay in the good times, and underpay, or not pay at all, when life gets tough. Without having to crawl on bended knee to their bank manager, insecurity at work, and the increase in contract and casual employment, make this a vital facility for many.

But for really effective flex-



New flexible mortgage deals could save you thousands and be tailored to your requirements John Lawrence

ibility, interest on these mortgages has to be calculated quite differently from the current method. This has serious implications for computer systems and the finance industry.

Building societies and traditional mortgage lenders have always worked out interest annually. At the beginning of the year they calculate your monthly repayments and your balance remains unchanged until the end of the year, when they do the sums again.

Standard Life, which calculates interest daily, estimates that a borrower can save £2,200 off an £80,000, 20-year mortgage by calculating interest daily rather than annually. A staggering £12,000 can be saved by upping the repayment by £50 a month. Traditional lenders have always fiercely denied that annual calculation costs borrowers more, but there are signs that their defences are beginning to crack.

Alliance & Leicester's mortgage marketing manager, Jeff Sutherland-Kay, is convinced that it is only a matter of time

before all mortgages offer flexibility and the choice of monthly rather than annual interest. He says: "Every lender in the country is looking at launching a flexible mortgage, because we know that's what customers want. The world has changed. People no longer wish to make the same repayment over 25 years. They want to pay off more in the good times and less in the bad times, and for their overall interest bill to be cut accordingly - and that means monthly interest."

"I have no doubt that, over time, every mortgage product in the mortgage portfolio will offer this potential, but in the short term there are chronic computer system problems."

The mortgage brokers John Charcol are less sanguine about lenders' motives for sticking with annual interest. A spokesman, Ian Darby says: "The thing that's holding them

back is the cost. There will be one hell of a price to pay if the mainstream lenders are forced into flexibility. If the traditional lenders start charging interest on a monthly or daily rather than annual basis, their balance sheets will take a hammering. We are talking tens of millions of pounds."

In his view, it was the Woolwich initiative that broke the mould: "For the first time you had a mainstream lender offering a competitive range of mortgage options with the flexibility to over- and underpay, and interest charged monthly."

But the Halifax points out that while monthly charging can work in a customer's favour when he is repaying, early, it has the opposite impact for borrowers with difficulties.

A spokesman says: "Don't forget, if interest is adjusted monthly or daily, the arrears will climb faster as well."

LOOSE CHANGE

THE PRICE of traded endowment policies has fallen because of fears of reduced annual and terminal bonuses, but the policies are now cheaper and less volatile than shares, say TEP market-makers Policy Portfolio. (0181-343-4567 for a stock list). Average annualised growth of policies sold last year was 10.35 per cent.

FAMILY MEDIATION is a cheaper option for divorcing couples according to the UK College of Family Mediators, established in 1996. Mediators can be found in the phone book or by calling the college on 0171-391-9162.

PROPERTY-OWNERS on the Net looking for a cheaper

remortgage can access www.moneyextra.com 24 hours a day for a free search facility.

PAUL YOUNG, the independent financial advisers, is offering a free guide to Venture Capital Trusts aimed mainly at individuals with CGT to pay. Call 0500-701707 during office hours.

The First Ireland Investment Company Plc

to invest your PEP in the
Irish economic boom
and the Euro-zone
go with Govett.

The First Ireland Investment Company is a simple way to take advantage of Ireland's booming economy and the advent of the Euro. The Company, available as a PEP, purely invests in Irish shares and has outperformed the Irish equity market in 6 out of the 7 years since it was launched. In the year to 4th January 1999 the share price has risen over 34% and by more than 113% over 5 years. It's even available as a PEP. Little wonder then that Micropal has awarded it 'Best European Single Country Fund' three times. To share in this success for as little as £25, speak to your usual financial adviser or contact us at local rate on 0845 300 90 90 for more details.



astute investors go with

0845 300 90 90 Please send me details of The First Ireland Investment Company and the Govett Investment Trust Savings Scheme. Post to: Customer Services Department, AIB Govett, Shackleton House, 4 Battle Bridge Lane, London SE1 2SL.

Name/Title/Address Postcode Tel (UK) 0171-251-1111

Initial

Information you provide may be used to inform you of other products and services available from AIB Govett. If you do not wish to receive such information please tick here ☐

I do not wish to receive this information or to be contacted with other Govett products. If you prefer please tick here ☐

Please note: AIB Govett is not a bank, deposit only in sterling terms.

Please note: This is not a recommendation to invest in the Govett Investment Trust Savings Scheme. The price of shares, and the income from them, may go down as well as up, and you may not get back the amount you invest. You are responsible for your own investment decisions and should seek advice from a professional adviser before investing. The value of your investment, particularly in the short term, may fluctuate significantly. The Govett Investment Trust Savings Scheme is not a contract with AIB Govett. The Govett Investment Trust Savings Scheme is not a contract with AIB Govett. The Govett Investment Trust Savings Scheme is not a contract with AIB Govett.

The low cost high income PEP

INVEST NOW
to make the most of your final year's PEP allowance

PROVIDER	ANNUAL MANAGEMENT CHARGE	RUNNING YIELD
Legal & General Corporate Bond PEP	0.5%	6.2%
Edinburgh Mortgage Investment PEP	0.7%	6.1%
Virgin Income PEP	0.7%	6.0%
Barclays Managed Income PEP	0.75%	5.8%

NO initial charges on lump sum investments
NO withdrawal fee
0.5% annual management charge

Visit our web site at www.landg.com

Find out more now - call freephone

0500 1166 22

8am to 8pm weekdays
9am to 5pm weekends

Please quote ref: D7D303

Legal & General have led the way in providing low cost, high performance PEPs to our customers.

Over the years, our determination to provide outstanding value for money has meant that today Legal & General has in excess of £74 billion¹ under management worldwide.

A glance at the table shows that we deliver unbeatable value, providing the lowest cost diversified Corporate Bond PEP on the market with annual management charges of only 0.5%, with no initial charges on lump sum investments or withdrawal fees.

So, for a regular, tax-free income on your savings find out more about Britain's best value Income PEP today.

Just complete and return the coupon.

Yes I would like more information about the Legal & General Corporate Bond PEP. For my information, please tick here: ☐ I am already a PEP investor. ☐ I am not a PEP investor. I would like to know more about the Legal & General Corporate Bond PEP. I would like to know more about the Legal & General Corporate Bond PEP. I would like to know more about the Legal & General Corporate Bond PEP.



Why invest in our savings plan?
Don't ask an economist,
ask an historian.



Take a look back over the past 20 years and you'll see that the Foreign & Colonial Investment Trust has been one of the most successful performers. Turn back the clock 131 years to 1868, and you'll see the reason why. That's when we invented the investment trust. And it's this vast experience that allows us to consistently out-perform many of our rivals.

It's also the reason why knowledgeable investors make our Private Investor Plan their first choice. The Plan allows you to save with regular monthly contributions or, if you prefer, with the occasional lump sum. What's more, you'll find our shares are amongst the lowest.

If you'd like to know more you can order our free brochure by calling us on 0181 880 8120 or by completing the coupon below. And you could soon find your future benefiting from our history.

To: Foreign & Colonial Management Ltd, PO Box 11020, London N4 1UA.

Title Initial

Surname

Address

Postcode

Foreign Colonial
Those in the know, choose us.

The value of shares and the income from them will fall as well as rise and you may not get back the full amount invested. Past performance is no guide to the future. All figures quoted Standard & Poor's Market 2000-1998. Investment trust figures based on net asset value, not income reinvested, and historical 3.5% national average. Actual Plan charges 0.2% commission and 0.5% fee. Stamp duty. Building society figures based on highest net rate available (UK Savings Certificate). Annual yield return, not income reinvested. A building society account is not exposed to stockmarket risk of fluctuating capital values. Foreign & Colonial Management Limited (regulated by FIMB and the Personal Investment Authority) or its subsidiaries are managers of the investment trust.

www.fandc.co.uk

SHOPPING

A London-based duo are transforming window blinds with their innovative use of textiles. By Dominic Lutyens

Update your windows with designs worth their salt



Wake up to the sight of a blind from Salt and you might easily think you were still dreaming. It's not hard to see why: in the half-light, the company's organic-looking, three-dimensional creations could conjure up surreal visions of, say, a rock-ace smothered with barnacles, dinosaur vertebrae or tetrahedra. Blinds hardly reminiscent of trips to the Natural History Museum might not be everyone's dream design discovery, but don't be put off.

Made of knitted and woven textiles in the subtlest of hand-dyed shades, the blinds are as beautiful as they are arresting. "Blinds are a product no one had really looked at for years, so it seemed a logical area to go into," says Karina Holmes, who, with June Swindell, set up Salt in 1996. "We had a gut feeling that there was room for our ideas. And there was: we discovered that people wanted different, interesting blinds."

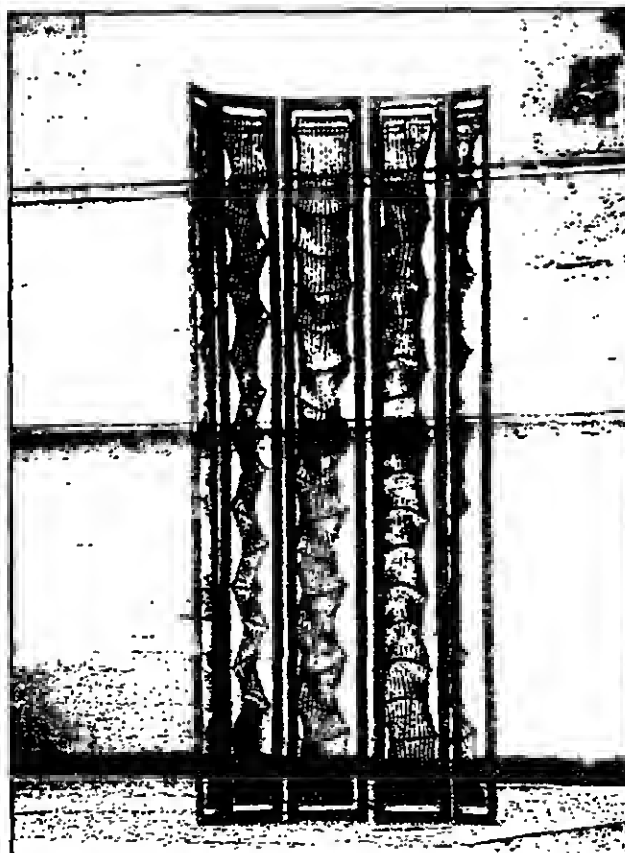
"Contemporary design had been about architecture for the past 10 years," continues Holmes. "But we've entered a new area, which we call 'working textiles' because our blinds are not only functional but also decorative, thanks to their textures and forms. The funny thing is, big furniture designers are now using highly textured fabrics: bouclés and unusual yarns. Even so, people still don't know what to do with them in because we're not textile designers in the traditional sense."

Not that the Salt duo - who also make cushions - have always relied on agents' help. Holmes, who has an MA in knitted textiles from the Royal College of Art, and Swindell, with an MA in woven textiles from Nottingham Polytechnic, bonded while working at a "loathsome, unprofessional" homework company. Their experience there - "we learnt how not to do things" - and a realisation that they had a "common interest in light and transparency", galvanised them to apply, successfully, for a Seabury's scholarship.

Thanks to this, they were able to set up studio at London's Oxo Tower Wharf. The press quickly picked up on us - *ELLE*



In the half-light, these delicate, surreal-looking creations (top) are as beautiful as they are arresting. On closer inspection (above), it is not difficult to see that modern architecture is the inspiration for Salt's extraordinary and sculptural vertical blind systems, made from knitted textiles.



Decoration featured us on its 'New Talent' page - and we got commissioned straight away," says Swindell. Since then, Harrods has been stocking Salt's ready-made blinds (from £400) and screens (from £1,200). And the company, which has corporate as well as private clients, is currently kitting out the British Embassy in Moscow. "Consultancy work has started to land in our laps, too," says Holmes. "Strangely enough, the paper company Arjo Wiggins Fine Papers asked us to develop some paper textures."

While Holmes works with knitted fabrics using an industrial knitting machine,

Swindell specialises in woven textiles made on a loom. Salt's extraordinary, sculptural vertical blind systems - some of which incorporate aluminium rods to support their three-dimensional "totems" (its name for louvres) - are made from knitted textiles. These, says Holmes, are inspired by modern architecture and by "tall, skinny proportions, like the people in Modigliani paintings or Brancusi's sculptures".

Even Swindell's old-fashioned looking loom is put to innovative use: one of Salt's most original blinds, made from woven textiles, is near-transparent at the top and

opaque at the bottom. While bringing in some light, it guarantees total privacy, which relates to another inspired Salt idea: blinds which let in a controlled stream of light - or, more surprisingly, to double as a funky light source. Indeed, Salt has developed a "beam blind" incorporating glow-in-the-dark fibres, which, says Swindell, looks "great in restaurants".

Meanwhile, Holmes is designing a blind called Lighten. "A sheet of paper with an electric circuit that lights up will be inserted into the knit," she says. Yet, while Salt's blinds can be impressively hi-tech - some open by remote control - others

are comfortingly low-tech. In the pipeline is a range of "warm blinds" - roller blinds in a thick, tribal-looking felt, made by artisans in Central Asia. As with all Salt's designs, these come in super-subtle, tone-on-tone browns and beiges. "Our blinds have very busy textures," says Swindell. "If they were colourful, there'd be too much going on."

The blinds can also be made to measure, in which case Holmes and Swindell like to visit their clients to decide on what would best suit their space. "It's like buying a wedding dress, not in a twee sense, but in that the customer is involved in how their blind will look," says Holmes. "We ask for 50 per cent of the cost upfront, so clients need to feel confident with what we're doing," adds Swindell.

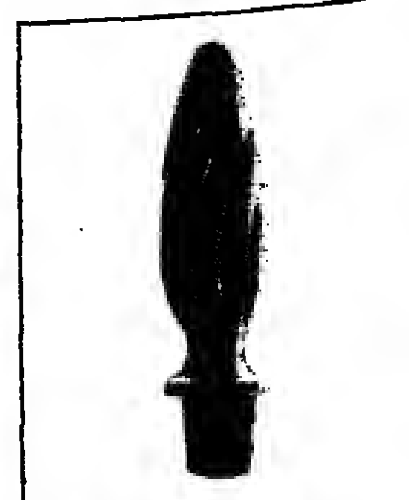
The clients' involvement doesn't stop there, however. Many of the blinds are fashionably modular, too. "Components can be detached or added to alter the blind's look," says Holmes. The screens, meanwhile, were conceived with open-plan living in mind - they can be moved about to change the layout of a room. "Many of our customers," says Holmes, "live in loft conversions. Some people still value traditional interiors because they're associated with wealth, but there's a new group of people - and interior designers - interested in contemporary design."

Yet your average interior designer still has some catching up to do on the modern design front, believes Swindell. "We thought the bulk of our clientele would be interior designers or decorators, but it's actually our customers who put them in touch with us. Old-school decorators still source stuff from the chintzier Chelsea Harbour end of the market, but they're having to change to meet different tastes."

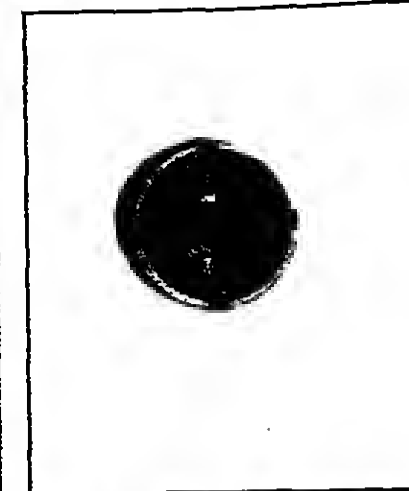
By the sound of it, then, Salt isn't going down a blind alley. The company's designs might look unsettlingly surreal, but they're nothing if not directional. Frou-frou Austrian blinds or, for that matter, standard roller blinds - your days could well be numbered.

Salt products are available at Harrods (0171-730 1234) or contact the company direct on 0171-593 0007

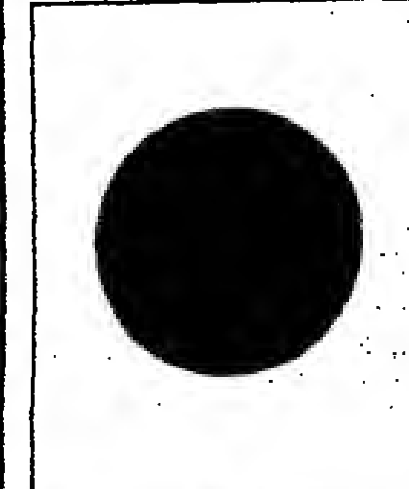
SIX OF THE BEST BOTTLESTOPPERS



Aluminium stopper, £8, Oliver Bonas (0171-627 4747 for nearest shop)



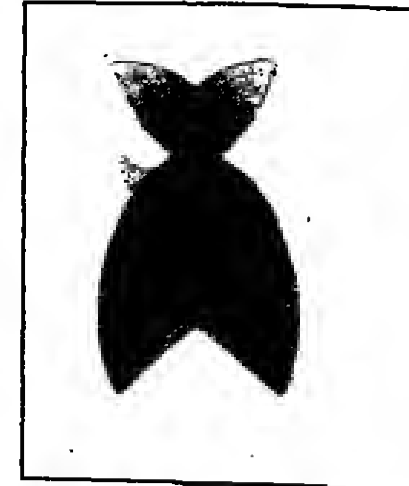
Bouchon de Champagne 'Capsule', £17.50, General Trading Company (0171-730 0411)



Manzoni Pietro wooden stopper, £4.45, David Mellor (0171-730 4259)



Sterling silver stopper, £48, Links of London (01483 450155 for nearest stockist)



Plastic fish stopper, £4.25, Graham & Green (0171-727 4594)



Plastic star stopper, £1.99, Tesco (enquiries 0800 505555)

GOOD THING

STILL waiting for a call? Give the reluctant Romeo - or Juliet - a chic shove in the right direction with a solid silver Loveheart. It comes either with the usual "Loveheart" messages or more modern greetings: "fax me", "e-mail me", etc. and costs £25 from Judy Wiseman (0181-343 2453). For £1 extra, get your phone or fax number or e-mail address engraved on the back.

CHEESE AND romance don't always make an obvious coupling but, if you want to impress on Valentine's Day, be prepared to satisfy



suitors by filling your fridge with little heart-shaped cranberry and Wensleydale cheeses. They come suitably coated in red wax and cost 99p each from Asda (enquiries 0500 100055). MURIEL DESAULLES

MAD THING

SOME COMPANIES know exactly how to market themselves to best advantage and Loud and Clear is just one of those. Not only is the catalogue full of bright and funky presents, it even comes with a sheet of dazzling yellow and white stickers to fill up your diary with reminders of not-to-be-forgotten occasions ("hen night", "dinner", "football", "hot date" and, of course, "drinks"). Even better, each of the little stickers comes with the Loud and Clear phone number written across the bottom, just in case you should need a little



gift for that special occasion. Neat idea, eh? The gifts in question are just as much fun - swirly lollipops, flamboyant silken flowers,

neon-coloured toy guns and single slices of icing-topped cake, to name just a few. All are sent vacuum-packed in plastic with the appropriate, quirky gift tag attached. The idea is that the gift donates up as the greeting, so you select the item you want to send (from £4.95 for a pair of bright red lips or a slice of lightly grilled toast (whatever greeting that says), to £9.95 for the fluffy "mini-nubile" cushion) and then choose the tag to match (remembering to specify your message), before calling 0171-247 4232 to make your order by credit card.

صحنه الامم

I WANT TO OWN A... PLAYBOY'S BAR KIT

How to spend a happy hour

Drinking is a bit like sex. Having sampled your way round the entire bar and made sure that you have experienced the most exotic flavours around, you usually narrow down your choice to a couple of reassuringly predictable and satisfying tipples that you can get at home every night without too much effort.

But it doesn't have to be this way. In the Sixties, when everyone was swinging, behind rayon curtains across the land people were concocting martinis and gin slings at their cocktail bars (remember Dustin Hoffman in *The Graduate*? That could have been your dad).

I was introduced to this alternative way of life when I picked up a white elephant of a cocktail bar at a jumble sale a decade ago. In truth, though, it never really fitted in anywhere. It was never quite kitsch enough to be cool, weighed a ton, and required half an acre to unfurl its hinged Formica flap top into a glorious semicircle. Its stitched-padding fascia, meanwhile, was tar-stained and fag-burnt and its golden braiding had long since become sharp as razor-wire.

Yet at least the thing wasn't as naïf as some of its peers, several of which were designed to emulate the prows of classic ocean liners. And, at four quid, it remains my personal undisputed jumble-sale bargain of the century - a welcoming host to pink plastic, coconut-tree swizzle-sticks and plywood tooth picks, a chrome cocktail shaker, stainless steel strainers, and spirits. An awful lot of spirits.

The beloved cocktail bar survived tower-block-rocking parties in Tower Hamlets, when the only item of front-room furniture - a cube table - was hurriedly stored to its sorry destruction. It was the centre-piece of a riotous cocktail party held in a rented West Hampstead house, and illuminated a kitchen in Clapton before, finally, the elegant curved glass in its upper deck was shattered in Stoke Newington by my offspring.

Although the memory of its mel-low golden glow has started to wane, the taste of a Slow Comfortable Screw is harder to exorcise. So if, like

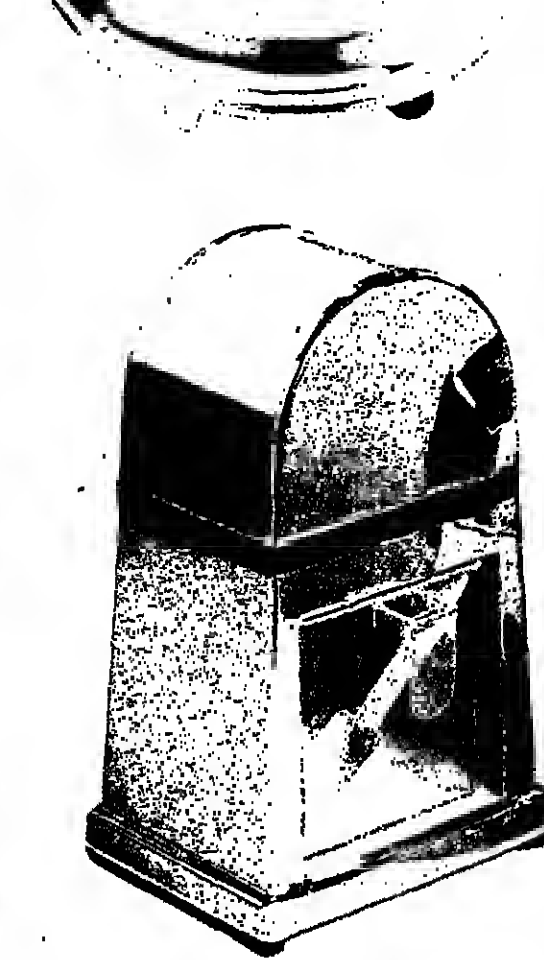
me, on occasion you hanker after the life of F Scott Fitzgerald and would like to get a Crazy Horse down your neck (for the uninitiated: 30ml Scotch, 10ml strawberry liqueur, 10ml creme de banane, shaken and strained into a champagne flute, topped up with 60ml of Bolly and garnished with orange and mint), then you will need to invest in the following accessories (cocktail bar optional):

BLENDER/JUICE EXTRACTOR
As discussed in a healthier column on juicing earlier this month, nothing approaches the combined style and versatility of Waring's Professional Blender (£149.95) and Extractor (£239, 0181-232 8171 for stockists), although for kitsch bar-top credibility, Hamilton Beach's bulbous chrome dome Drinks Master (£59.95, Liberty, 0171-734 1234) takes the silver medal.

BEER BOTTLE OPENER
Name: Alessi Diabolix
Price: £7.95
Stockist: 01920 444272
Description: The Diabolix has a smooth, curved plastic hand-grip topped with impish devil's horns. Designed by Biagio Ciscotti in 1994, the opener comes in a handful of colours, but the most appropriate is bright red.

Style: ★★ ★
Anything else worth considering? If you always spend half-an-hour stumbling around the kitchen looking for something to crack open a beer, then you'll be requiring Culinaire's Crab (£2.95, 0181-868 43355), a bright orange crustacean with a bridge magnet welded to its underbelly.

ICE BOX
Name: The Planet Earth acrylic cube
Price: £99
Stockist: John Lewis (0171-629 7711 for nearest store)
Description: For novelty value - and let's face it, the cocktail-making arena is one of the few places where you can go kitsch crazy and still be regarded as having reasonable taste - this clear cube, hollowed out to resemble a mould of our planet, is the epitome of cool.
Style: ★★ ★



Anything else worth considering? Alessi, which is always on hand with a few funky accessories, does a reasonable stainless-steel egg complete with reindeer horns (£45). The plastic top-hat ice buckets that you can get, though, are way beyond ironic.

ICE-CRUSHER
Name: BarWare Ice-Crusher
Price: £45
Stockist: House of Fraser (0171-963 2236 for enquiries)
Description: My what sharp teeth you have, Grandma. This chrome-plated machine has got a big bite for one so small.
Style: ★★ ★
Anything else worth considering? If you've got a decent blender, then this is one accessory that you can probably live without.

SHAKER
Name: The Bullet by Metrokane
Price: £29.75
Stockist: John Lewis (0171-629 7711 for nearest store)
Description: An Art-Deco-inspired, bullet cartridge shaker with a 28oz capacity and an internal strainer, perfect for making those James Bond Martinis.
Style: ★★ ★ ★
Anything else worth considering? Several manufacturers make the more traditional three-piece, stainless-steel shakers, or you can go for the more simplistic "Boston" shaker which doesn't include a strainer.

SODA SYPHON
Name: Isi Soda Siphon
Price: £39
Stockist: John Lewis (0171-629 7711 for nearest store)
Description: Despite being a pretty redundant item of hardware, the soda siphon remains a must for every well-stocked bar. For its swanky sense of style, its potential as a lifesaver in emergencies involving smouldering cocktail dresses and for all-round high jinks. They often come in gaudy golds and ruby red casing, but Isi's soda siphon has a restrained black and chrome top and a tasteful mesh casing.
Style: ★★ ★ ★

BAR ACCESSORIES
Name: Bar Atlantic eight-piece stainless steel bar set
Price: £40
Stockist: Debenhams (0171-408 4444 for stockists)
Description: The tiny bucket may be more appropriate for holding cashew nuts than a wine bottle and

ice (as optimistically illustrated on the box), but otherwise this set comprises the surgeon's tools of the budding bartender: clip-on cocktail strainer, bottle-opener, stirrer, jigger, knife, ice-cube tongs and double-sided measures for 25ml and 50ml shots respectively.
Style: ★★ ★
Anything else worth considering? Well, if money is no object you can quickly rack up a Third World debt on silver-plated bar furnishings, such as a 50ml, £105 measure, from Selfridges (0171-629 1234).

FINISHING TOUCHES
To make sure you're more of shaker-maker than Tom Cruise in the cocktail department, ensure that the following items are also readily to hand: chopping-board, citrus peeler, paring-knife, a grater, long-handled

metal bar spoons, swizzle sticks, straws, cocktail sticks, a muddler (for crushing sugar and bruising mint leaves), suitable glasses (avoid ones etched with functional words such as "juice" and "martini"), a jug, Irish coffee spoons, and an ice cube tray. A decent selection of spirits and mixers (Angostura bitters and grenadine are essential) is also advisable, plus a little cheat book that can be discreetly tucked away. The notebook-sized *How to Make Over 200 Cocktails* (50p, Claremont Books) is perfect. Finally, don't forget the finishing touch without which no cocktail party guest can recognise their own ridiculousness - the paper umbrellas (£1.69, Tesco, 0800 508555 for enquiries).

SHAUN PHILLIPS

The writer is deputy editor of 'ZM'

CHECK IT OUT

HI-TECH ALTERNATIVES

THE MUST be something about the his-roach of a new millennium that makes people want to go all technological. Whatever the reason, even "alternative" aspects of contemporary life are repackaging themselves into hi-tech phenomena. If you're seeking peace of body, mind or soul, there's almost certainly a futuristic gadget out there to help you achieve it.

If you're searching for something to soothe the soul, forget the odd wind chime here and there, these days even feng shui has gone digital. The latest feng shui website offers an interactive service that will let even troubled travellers bring feng shui to their hotel room. Simply connect up to the site, pay by credit card (£11 per room) and sit back while Kate Lord and Huw Griffiths, the online feng shui consultants, assess your surroundings.

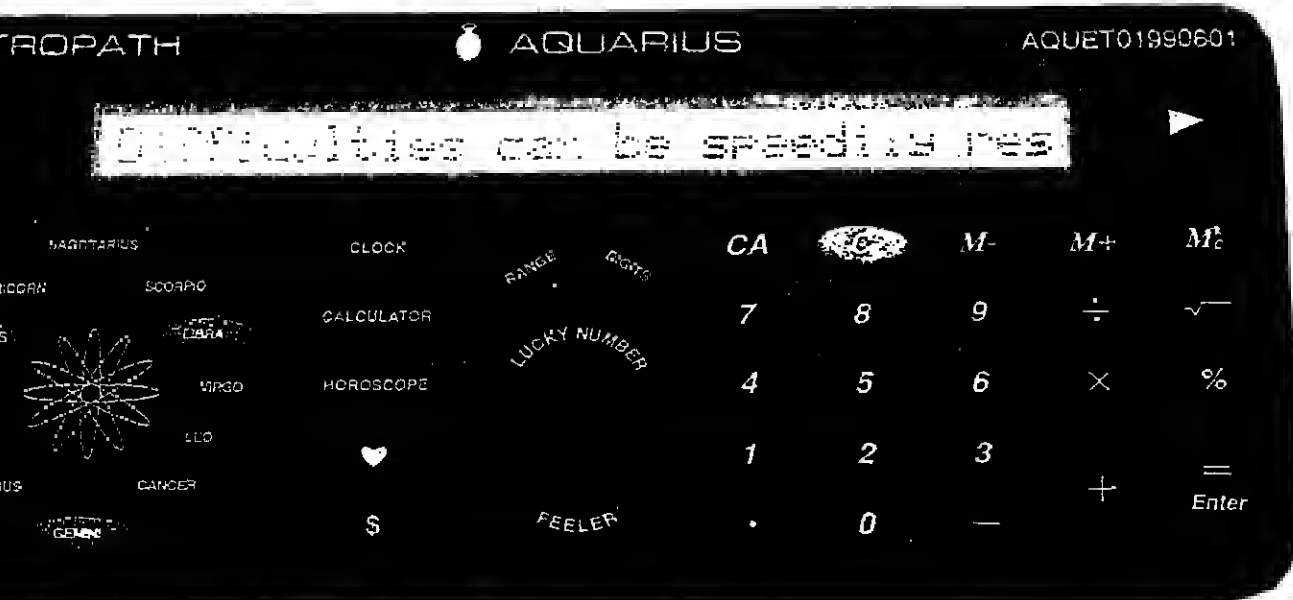
Patience will be necessary, however. The site is still in its teething stage so there is a long wait while all the images load up - the suggestion is that you scroll through the instructions in the pop-up window to pass the time - and my computer put down a very bad cr'f foot by refusing to let me access the service.

If your computer is more generous, start at the beginning and read the consultants' biographies, catch up on the latest celebrity visitors and browse the example room report before going to "start". After tapping in the direction of the room's door, you use the computer to "draw" a

picture of the room and then, after paying the necessary cash, wait for the report to materialise.

Once you've taken the site's advice and got your living space sorted, move onto the mind with an Astropath. For those who secretly scan the papers for the horoscopes, £19.99 will buy a whole year's worth of detailed daily astrological predictions. These natty named machines look reassuringly like the calculator included in its range of functions (so no one need know what you're up to) and are available for each sign of the zodiac.

To find out your horoscope on any day in 1999, click on the "horoscope" button, punch in the date and scroll across the battery-powered LCD screen. Compiled by a team of professional astrologers - including Nicholas Campion, the president of the Astrological Association of Great Britain - the horoscopes are enticingly frivolous but, as with all things astrological, whether you decide that they are accurate or not largely comes down to your own beliefs.



Sceptics will be put off by the detail (claims that I wrote poetry yesterday did not materialise), but it's fun, would make a great present and has all kinds of useful functions. The Astropath helps you choose numbers for the National Lottery, bounces the afore-mentioned calculator and an alarm clock and even works out emotional and professional compatibility with other people for each day of the year. Blimey! The latest scheduling accessory is also related to astrology although

it's not an astrological calendar. The Greta Kahn Moon Diary (£5.95 plus 45p P&P) is based around "moon knowledge". The diary laments the fact that "the best time to sow seed or to cut wood ceased to be a theme in the lives of bankers and office workers", but it aims to change all that and use the same principles as are used in agriculture to help organise the hip urbanite's hairdressing year.

Strange, but apparently it's true. The different planetary positions and

stellar constellations throughout the lunar cycle transmit "cosmic energies" which affect us physically. The effect of all this is that a waxing moon is the ideal time for cutting and nourishing hair treatments whereas a waning moon is a better time for cleansing. Certain days are good for colouring and anti-dandruff treatments and other days - "water" days - are bad for pretty much everything except structure-improving treatments.

Before you so much as turn a

page in the diary, you must have your hair analysed then, once you've pinpointed its type, you can consult the diary to find out what you should or shouldn't do to your hair. Each day of the year has an entry listing whether it's a good or bad day for cutting, perming or pretty much everything to do with your hair as well as space to scribble down all the necessary hair appointments.

In case you're wondering, today is a good day for cutting your hair if you want to increase volume and

encourage rapid growth. Hair care treatments will be effective and oxidising and bleaching processes will work well... it doesn't say anything about washing, but I think I'll risk it.

RHIANNON BATTEN
The feng shui website is at www.online-fengshui.com; for Astropath stockists, call 0171-229 9394; copies of 'The Moon And Your Hair' can be ordered from www.gretakahn.com or by phone on 0181-886 7720



The Astropath, left, and moon diary, above

The Ford Focus is a little estate with room to spare. By Gavin Green

Small thinks big

THE FORD Focus hit the car scene with the same sort of impact that Michael Owen hit the football pitch, and the accolades were just as fast in coming. The hatchback version of the Focus – the only model launched thus far – has won just about every magazine comparison test it's been in. It's been fêted around Europe and also easily won the 1999 Car of the Year award.

What was significant about its victory in the COTY was not just the margin of its win, which was big, but the widespread nature of its popularity. The judges from France liked it just as much as those from Finland; ditto the Greeks, Germans, Belgians, Britons, Swedes and Spaniards. Often the COTY judges back their national favourites. Not this year. The Focus wiped the board. To cap off a terrific couple of months for Ford, the Focus has just picked up top marks in the official NCAP European safety tests.

But like any new star, there comes a time when the sparkle will start to flicker. And that's when the critics, who have lauded the new Focus like no other mass-made car I can remember, will be poised, knives ready to thrust.

The first big opportunity for the knockers comes when a car's model range starts to proliferate. Yes, yes, the hatch may be ace. But can the other versions which follow possibly be as good? Well, the Focus range is about to go from hatch only to estate and four-door saloon as well. Here, we test the load-lugging estate version.

Let's start on a sour note. The hold-all model doesn't look as elegant as the freshly-styled hatch. The estate's back end looks rather grafted on, like a box-room extension to an already handsome building. The stylish Sloane Square front sits uncomfortably with the suburban semi-detached stern. There are very few estates that look like they were designed as estates from the outset, with most looking like converted hatchbacks or saloons.

In lugging capacity, though, the new estate is excellent. Ford claims it is the roomiest car in its class, and if you start to cart around big loads you'll be unlikely to gainsay them. The carrying area is high, wide, uncluttered and well able to accom-



On the road: the Ford Focus handles superbly, with a range of engines to choose from

SPECIFICATIONS

Make and model: Ford Focus 1.6 Zetec estate £14,000
Engine: 1,596cc, four cylinders, 16 valves, 100bhp at 6,000rpm
Transmission: Five-speed manual, front wheel drive
Performance: Maximum speed 115mph, 0-60mph in 11.0 seconds, 40.9mpg average

Peugeot 306 1.6iLX estate £14,220. Stylish, good to drive, soft riding, but not as spacious as the Ford

Vauxhall Astra 1.6iLX estate £14,045. Probably the Focus's keenest rival. Spacious and smooth, but the cabin's trim is second-rate

RIVALS

Citroën Xsara 1.6iLX estate £13,635. Good ride, nippy enough and quite roomy, but lacks the engaging driving manners of the Focus

Volkswagen Golf 1.8CL estate £13,920. The estate Golf still uses the old Golf's underpinnings, so it's outgunned by the new Ford in just about every way

moderate large objects. The rear seats fold forward, to let in more luggage. Pity the bottom back-seat cushion is one-piece, when the rear backrests are split 60:40. It's one of the few obvious signs of Ford penny pinching, and does compromise the car's load-carrying versatility.

As with the Focus hatch, the rear seat is outstandingly roomy, offer-

ing excellent head- and leg-room. In every area except shoulder-room, it is as spacious as the Mondeo in the next class-up. Trim quality is also good, even if the Focus lacks the class of the Golf.

The dashboard is a strange futuristic design, which won't appeal to everyone. But it sits all the controls very conveniently – including

the radio, up nice and high in the centre of the dash. The only blemish is on the top-range Ghia version, which gets a awful fake wood, which clearly comes from a cheap tube rather than a majestic tree.

The Focus estate drives superbly. It handles and steers as well as the Focus hatch, the class benchmark, and is well ahead of rivals. It's only when the load starts to get really heavy that its fleetness suffers.

There's a range of engines on offer, but the best is the 1.6-litre petrol engine. It is smooth revving, pleasingly brisk and extremely economical. You should have little difficulty getting close to 40mpg. If you want more zip, but less refinement, the 1.8- and 2.0-litre engines won't disappoint.

Personally, I'd stick with the more handsome five-door Focus hatch, and pay the home-delivery fee every time I buy too much at Ikea or Homebase. But if you really want the carrying capacity, and fancy a small estate, then there is no better choice. The styling may be more disjointed than the hatch. But the Focus estate is still a terrifically good car.

Kings of the road at knockdown prices

If you have got to have a 4x4, then the current market slump means now is the time to pick up a bargain. By James Ruppert

FOUR-BY-FOURS have been found out. Used off-roaders are now officially in the price doldrums and are cheaper than they have been for many years.

That is odd because the winter is usually boom time for vehicles of this type, and one would expect to see values strengthening along with demand. However, if you genuinely need to buy or have always promised yourself a 4x4, now is probably the time to buy.

Even so, some models are better value than others. According to the January issue of CAP Black Book, one of the motor industry's leading price guides, the 4x4 sector has been struggling for most of 1998. It believes that the trend will continue this year. CAP makes the observation that buyers favour the two opposite ends of this market. Fashionable, so-called lifestyle 4x4s (such as Honda CRVs and Toyota RAV 4s) are still popular, while high-mileage, well-established off-roaders more than five years old are doing very well. Everything else is struggling.

So there has never been a better time to put this marketplace under the microscope and maybe even dip your toes into the wonderful world of used off-roaders.

So what is happening? Well, certain kinds of 4x4s are coming to the end of their fashion cycle. A lot of buyers switched from hot hatches to 4x4s in the early Nineties when insurance premiums went through the roof and appreciated the attention-seeking dimensions of a two-storey truck. It did not take long for owners to realise that they were actually slow, ugly, uneconomical and, in the urban areas where they were mostly used, a pain to park. Bad publicity about pedestrian safety from bull bars did not help either, and so the 4x4 backlash was in full swing. That soon filtered down to the used market, making it harder to sell certain models.

CAP identified two particular models at the top end of the market. The Range Rover 4.6 HSE costs a staggering £50,990. However, to the gentlemen of the motor trade, a 1998 R-registration example is worth



Jeep Grand Cherokee 4.0 Orvis

just £33,800. With only 10,000 miles on the clock and buffed up for the forecourt, it will be temptingly priced at no more than £36,995.

CAP also thought that the Mitsubishi Shogun GLX was a high-profile model set to struggle this year. By contrast, though, genuine pre-used 4x4s, like the older Land Rover Discovery, Vauxhall Frontera and Isuzu Trooper are all in high demand. That probably has a lot to do with all three of those models recently being replaced by pretty

I could feel the seller wilting under not too much pressure to bring the price down

much physically identical, although technically superior new models.

Marketing research reveals that people like the familiar, chunky shapes, but that also seems to be doing no harm to used values, although in the short term, they may make the latest models suffer a price crisis. Most surprising of all is the strength of the real muddy boots brigade. The Land Rover, in its Defender and older guise, continues to perform like the legend it is and is never likely to go out of fashion.

Lada may not be the most fashionable motoring name, but the discontinued Niva range still makes converts. This cheap and cheerful vehicle still manages to get an enthusiastic fan club for just a few

thousand pounds. Daihatsus are also respected rather than fashionable and the tough Fourtrak is the best of that breed. Indeed, Daihatsu with the Terios 4x4, tried to corner the micro off-road market with this model and has ended up slashing the new price by more than £2,000.

If you don't mind being unashamed, there are lots of bargains to be had. A 1994 three-door Discovery 300Tdi which has covered 70,000 miles costs at least £300 less than a five-door. If you can afford the fuel bills, knock more than £1,000 off for a petrol V8.

If you want a real 4x4 bargain, then you have to buy a vehicle from someone who maybe should not have got themselves lumbered with an off-roader in the first place. These 4x4 wannabes won't have damaged the vehicle off road, will have gently run it in and should be desperate to see the back of it. I took a trawl through the classified advertisements to see how long it would take to find some giveaway 4x4s. I found a 1988 Jeep Grand Cherokee Orvis which had done a year's motoring up for grabs at £28,000. Selling for more than £33,000 new, I could feel the seller wilting under not too much pressure, bringing the price down to the earlier £20,000s. Then there was the Frontera owner who gave it all away in the advertisement: he wanted to part-exchange his L-registration 2.3 TD model for a Vauxhall Corsa TD. Otherwise they wanted £8,500.

It is worth mentioning that there are increasing numbers of Japanese import models. These Mitsubishi Shoguns are badged Pajero and come with every conceivable extra for under £10,000. The Japanese Import Centre (01883 744438) is well worth a call.

Range Rover anyone? Well there isn't any good reason to pay much more than £10,000. There seem to be a lot of the last of the K and L registration models being cleared by the gentry. Maybe they know something we don't. Perhaps thirsty old Range Rovers are going to be banned. At these prices, they will certainly be an endangered species.

THERE'S a grey revolution going on, but nobody seems to have told the car companies.

The over 50s – the Saga set – have the highest disposable incomes, the greatest amount of leisure time, are the least likely to haggle and complain, will pay more for good service, and are usually the most loyal customers. And yet, in all their ads and their public utterances, car makers seem obsessed with winning ever-younger customers. Ageism is rife. Older buyers are being swept aside, in the car makers' quest to be seen as young and trendy.

Even Mercedes-Benz and Volvo, past champions of the

silver-haired set, are trying to be cool. At the recent press launch of the Mercedes S-class, the world's greatest car – usually bought by those on the wrong side of 50 – the talk was of trying to court a younger clientele. (Mercedes' boss did refer to "youthful customers" as being 40-45, which is not how Doc Martens, Dolce & Gabbana and Boyzone's publicists would define youth.)

Volvo, once the seminal sensible car for sensible people, now has ad campaigns which promote style and high performance – characteristics which traditional Volvo buyers have long eschewed. Sensible

people, usually more mature people, put safety, reliability and comfort ahead of sex appeal and the 0-60 figures. Volvo, apparently, no longer does so.

Both Volvo and Mercedes are trying to enjoy the same success as BMW and Audi in opening the wallets of young professionals. This seems wholly misguided, given that 50-pluses are better customers, in just about every way, than the 25-45s. Besides, the Zimmers don't like Blimmers because BMW has a flash, trendy image, which is complete anathema to many thinking people. Driving a BMW (especially a red one) is still a little bit like wearing a Versace



GAVIN GREEN

Older buyers are being swept aside in the car makers' quest to be seen as young and trendy

tie or a sweat-shirt with "Polo" emblazoned across it. It just isn't a very gentlemanly thing to do.

The quest to win young customers is usually misbegotten, anyhow. Renault put great emphasis on bow the Twingo baby car, sold throughout Europe but not in the UK, would win over the under-30s. Here was a car that had brightly coloured seats, chunky Fisher Price switchgear, and Toyotom styling. It had all the hallmarks of "Youth Appeal". It has also proved a great success, particularly in France. But guess who bought it? In the first year, most customers were over 50.

Renault marketing boss told me. "Old people were attracted to the Twingo's freshness. But young people, subsequent research showed, regard buying a car as a serious thing to do, so they tend to prefer sober, sensible cars."

Honda is another maker that finds itself in a dilemma. It is desperate to win an image as a manufacturer of trendy cars for trendy people. It built the NSX supercar, which was better than any Ferrari of the time, even if it didn't sell well. It has done Formula One successfully. And yet, in Britain at any rate, its saloon and hatch models are the consummate Eastbourne Expresses – sweet, well-made

cars for old people who value reliability over everything else. "We'd love a younger audience in Britain, but we can't desert our key customers," the marketing manager told me somewhat ruefully a year or so ago.

But why try to have a younger audience? I'm desperate for one car maker to break ranks, see over-50s as desirable customers instead of profitable embarrassments, and admit grey is good. How about a limited-edition Volvo (maybe called the V40 Viagra) with woollen blanket upholstery, M&S cardie colours, check-patterned roof lining and – the pièce de résistance – a bifocal windscreen?

MOTORING

MY WORST CAR

SIMON NEARN'S RENAULT 5 GORDINI

Strictly no left turn

I'VE HAD so many really awful cars over the years, but in their own special way I sort of still love them. When I was a car dealer, the number of bad cars I came across was horrendous. Before then, I got through a heap of cars as a student. The one I remember the best was a Renault 5.

It wasn't just an ordinary one, though, it was the fast one, in the shape of the Gordini version with a 1,400cc engine. I found it pretty safe, because it really wasn't fast enough to fall off the road. The trouble was that the gear knob kept coming off at the worst possible moment – such as changing gear. It would do odd things and make a nasty noise every time I turned left. Further investigation revealed that it had suffered a big shunt on the left-hand side and not been put back together very well afterwards.

I swore that I would never have one again, but that didn't stop me sticking with the Gordini for the time being, which meant that it could leave me stranded in the middle of roadworks on the M25. It had to go, but that Gordini needed some special selling skills. So when the buyer came around for a test drive, I told him to drive



Renault 5 Gordini – a nasty noise at every turn

right out of the house, first right, then right and finally right back into my drive. That was the only way I could avoid the noisy left-hand side showing up. Mind you, the guy I sold

abandon me at the NEC in Birmingham. I would never want another one, but I did end up with something as bad.

It was a Vauxhall Astra 2.0 GTE. Like the Gordini, it was a hot hatch, except that it would spin its wheels going up a hill and the handling was appalling. In lots of ways it was worse than the Renault and Metro put together. Luckily, someone liberated it on a bank holiday weekend in Manchester.

The gear knob kept coming off at the worst moment

it to in Wigan was back two days later to complain. After that, I remember having a horrible bright orange Austin Metro. It never broke down, but it would misfire above 50mph and did

Simon Nearn is the managing director of Catterham Cars, one of the UK's largest wholly-owned car manufacturers. Buy one of their sports cars by calling 0700 000077

GREAT CARS magazine
NEW for 1999
FREE Private photo advertisements
BEST Selection of premium quality cars for sale
Britain's Finest Showroom for Britain's Finest Cars
Now Four Weekly Available from all good newsagents

Citroen
2 YEARS FREE INSURANCE
Saxo East Coast
£7,295
A car, very special with lots of class

Porsche
2 YEARS FREE INSURANCE
Saxo West Coast
£9,550
Sporty 1.4i with Alloy wheels and 3 years warranty

GET TO GRIPS
with winter conditions
RWD Chassis Ltd, John Wilson Business Park
Whitehouse, Kent CT2 3DT
Telephone 01227 270911 Fax 01227 270939
Freephone 0800 731313

Cars for Sale
TAX FREE CARS
Save up to 30% on your 'T' Reg. car
We are now taking orders for New right-hand drive vehicles for March 1st (V5) delivery
All vehicles carry a 12-month warranty
• Order to your specification
• Save even more with our Unique self import guide. Visit our web site for a full tour of services including many vehicles available for IMMEDIATE DELIVERY
(P.N. finance and leasing. Written details on request)
SUSSEX IMPORTS LTD.
Web site: www.sussex-imports.co.uk
Tel: 01424 201881
Fax: 01424 201835

Registration Numbers
MARKET RESEARCH 1998/99
A1 1.6 1.8 2.0 2.2 2.4 2.6 2.8 3.0 3.2 3.4 3.6 3.8 4.0 4.2 4.4 4.6 4.8 5.0 5.2 5.4 5.6 5.8 6.0 6.2 6.4 6.6 6.8 7.0 7.2 7.4 7.6 7.8 8.0 8.2 8.4 8.6 8.8 9.0 9.2 9.4 9.6 9.8 10.0 10.2 10.4 10.6 10.8 11.0 11.2 11.4 11.6 11.8 12.0 12.2 12.4 12.6 12.8 13.0 13.2 13.4 13.6 13.8 14.0 14.2 14.4 14.6 14.8 15.0 15.2 15.4 15.6 15.8 16.0 16.2 16.4 16.6 16.8 17.0 17.2 17.4 17.6 17.8 18.0 18.2 18.4 18.6 18.8 19.0 19.2 19.4 19.6 19.8 20.0 20.2 20.4 20.6 20.8 21.0 21.2 21.4 21.6 21.8 22.0 22.2 22.4 22.6 22.8 23.0 23.2 23.4 23.6 23.8 24.0 24.2 24.4 24.6 24.8 25.0 25.2 25.4 25.6 25.8 26.0 26.2 26.4 26.6 26.8 27.0 27.2 27.4 27.6 27.8 28.0 28.2 28.4 28.6 28.8 29.0 29.2 29.4 29.6 29.8 30.0 30.2 30.4 30.6 30.8 31.0 31.2 31.4 31.6 31.8 32.0 32.2 32.4 32.6 32.8 33.0 33.2 33.4 33.6 33.8 34.0 34.2 34.4 34.6 34.8 35.0 35.2 35.4 35.6 35.8 36.0 36.2 36.4 36.6 36.8 37.0 37.2 37.4 37.6 37.8 38.0 38.2 38.4 38.6 38.8 39.0 39.2 39.4 39.6 39.8 40.0 40.2 40.4 40.6 40.8 41.0 41.2 41.4 41.6 41.8 42.0 42.2 42.4 42.6 42.8 43.0 43.2 43.4 43.6 43.8 44.0 44.2 44.4 44.6 44.8 45.0 45.2 45.4 45.6 45.8 46.0 46.2 46.4 46.6 46.8 47.0 47.2 47.4 47.6 47.8 48.0 48.2 48.4 48.6 48.8 49.0 49.2 49.4 49.6 49.8 50.0 50.2 50.4 50.6 50.8 51.0 51.2 51.4 51.6 51.8 52.0 52.2 52.4 52.6 52.8 53.0 53.2 53.4 53.6 53.8 54.0 54.2 54.4 54.6 54.8 55.0 55.2 55.4 55.6 55.8 56.0 56.2 56.4 56.6 56.8 57.0 57.2 57.4 57.6 57.8 58.0 58.2 58.4 58.6 58.8 59.0 59.2 59.4 59.6 59.8 60.0 60.2 60.4 60.6 60.8 61.0 61.2 61.4 61.6 61.8 62.0 62.2 62.4 62.6 62.8 63.0 63.2 63.4 63.6 63.8 64.0 64.2 64.4 64.6 64.8 65.0 65.2 65.4 65.6 65.8 66.0 66.2 66.4 66.6 66.8 67.0 67.2 67.4 67.6 67.8 68.0 68.2 68.4 68.6 68.8 69.0 69.2 69.4 69.6 69.8 70.0 70.2 70.4 70.6 70.8 71.0 71.2 71.4 71.6 71.8 72.0 72.2 72.4 72.6 72.8 73.0 73.2 73.4 73.6 73.8 74.0 74.2 74.4 74.6 74.8 75.0 75.2 75.4 75.6 75.8 76.0 76.2 76.4 76.6 76.8 77.0 77.2 77.4 77.6 77.8 78.0 78.2 78.4 78.6 78.8 79.0 79.2 79.4 79.6 79.8 80.0 80.2 80.4 80.6 80.8 81.0 81.2 81.4 81.6 81.8 82.0 82.2 82.4 82.6 82.8 83.0 83.2 83.4 83.6 83.8 84.0 84.2 84.4 84.6 84.8 85.0 85.2 85.4 85.6 85.8 86.0 86.2 86.4 86.6 86.8 87.0 87.2 87.4 87.6 87.8 88.0 88.2 88.4 88.6 88.8 89.0 89.2 89.4 89.6 89.8 90.0 90.2 90.4 90.6 90.8 91.0 91.2 91.4 91.6 91.8 92.0 92.2 92.4 92.6 92.8 93.0 93.2 93.4 93.6 93.8 94.0 94.2 94.4 94.6 94.8 95.0 95.2 95.4 95.6 95.8 96.0 96.2 96.4 96.6 96.8 97.0 97.2 97.4 97.6 97.8 98.0 98.2 98.4 98.6 98.8 99.0 99.2 99.4 99.6 99.8 100.0 100.2 100.4 100.6 100.8 101.0 101.2 101.4 101.6 101.8 102.0 102.2 102.4 102.6 102.8 103.0 103.2 103.4 103.6 103.8 104.0 104.2 104.4 104.6 104.8 105.0 105.2 105.4 105.6 105.8 106.0 106.2 106.4 106.6 106.8 107.0 107.2 107.4 107.6 107.8 108.0 108.2 108.4 108.6 108.8 109.0 109.2 109.4 109.6 109.8 110.0 110.2 110.4 110.6 110.8 111.0 111.2 111.4 111.6 111.8 112.0 112.2 112.4 112.6 112.8 113.0 113.2 113.4 113.6 113.8 114.0 114.2 114.4 114.6 114.8 115.0 115.2 115.4 115.6 115.8 116.0 116.2 116.4 116.6 116.8 117.0 117.2 117.4 117.6 117.8 118.0 118.2 118.4 118.6 118.8 119.0 119.2 119.4 119.6 119.8 120.0 120.2 120.4 120.6 120.8 121.0 121.2 121.4 121.6 121.8 122.0 122.2 122.4 122.6 122.8 123.0 123.2 123.4 123.6 123.8 124.0 124.2 124.4 124.6 124.8 125.0 125.2 125.4 125.6 125.8 126.0 126.2 126.4 126.6 126.8 127.0 127.2 127.4 127.6 127.8 128.0 128.2 128.4 128.6 128.8 129.0 129.2 129.4 129.6 129.8 130.0 130.2 130.4 130.6 130.8 131.0 131.2 131.4 131.6 131.8 132.0 132.2 132.4 132.6 132.8 133.0 133.2 133.4 133.6 133.8 134.0 134.2 134.4 134.6 134.8 135.0 135.2 135.4 135.6 135.8 136.0 136.2 136.4 136.6 136.8 137.0 137.2 137.4 137.6 137.8 138.0 138.2 138.4 138.6 138.8 139.0 139.2 139.4 139.6 139.8 140.0 140.2 140.4 140.6 140.8 141.0 141.2 141.4 141.6 141.8 142.0 142.2 142.4 142.6 142.8 143.0 143.2 143.4 143.6 143.8 144.0 144.2 144.4 144.6 144.8 145.0 145.2 145.4 145.6 145.8 146.0 146.2 146.4 146.6 146.8 147.0 147.2 147.4 147.6 147.8 148.0 148.2 148.4 148.6 148.8 149.0 149.2 149.4 149.6 149.8 150.0 150.2 150.4 150.6 150.8 151.0 151.2 151.4 151.6 151.8 152.0 152.2 152.4 152.6 152.8 153.0 153.2 153.4 153.6 153.8 154.0 154.2 154.4 154.6 154.8 155.0 155.2 155.4 155.6 155.8 156.0 156.2 156.4 156.6 156.8 157.0 157.2 157.4 157.6 157.8 158.0 158.2 158.4 158.6 158.8 159.0 159.2 159.4 159.6 159.8 160.0 160.2 160.4 160.6 160.8 161.0 161.2 161.4 161.6 161.8 162.0 162.2 162.4 162.6 162.8 163.0 163.2 163.4 163.6 163.8 164.0 164.2 164.4 164.6 164.8 165.0 165.2 165.4 165.6 165.8 166.0 166.2 166.4 166.6 166.8 167.0 167.2 167.4 167.6 167.8 168.0 168.2 168.4 168.6 168.8 169.0 169.2 169.4 169.6 169.8 170.0 170.2 170.4 170.6 170.8 171.0 171.2 171.4 171.6 171.8 172.0 172.2 172.4 172.6 172.8 173.0 173.2 173.4 173.6 173.8 174.0 174.2 174.4 174.6 174.8 175.0 175.2 175.4 175.6 175.8 176.0 176.2 176.4 176.6 176.8 177.0 177.2 177.4 177.6 177.8 178.0 178.2 178.4 178.6 178.8 179.0 179.2 179.4 179.6 179.8 180.0 180.2 180.4 180.6 180.8 181.0 181.2 181.4 181.6 181.8 182.0 182.2 182.4 182.6 182.8 183.0 183.2 183.4 183.6 183.8 184.0 184.2 1

They beat a path to your door

Would you back the right to roam if you had a public footpath outside your sitting room? By Penny Jackson

Not every one would relish the thought of being peered at over the garden hedge while enjoying an al fresco summer lunch. A home in the country tends to mean peace, quiet and above all privacy, shielded from the public gaze by acres of land.

But James Laing is used to strange faces popping up. His Berkshire farmhouse is surrounded on three sides by either a footpath or

it does make people think twice before buying a property with a public right of access. Some of the footpaths can run close to the main building. In James Laing's case, very close.

"When you get to the top of our driveway, the path comes to within 40 yards of the house, which you can see straight ahead. Then you can effectively walk right through the farm buildings and see the house from the other side over the garden hedge. The land is open there, with no gates or styles. Our main worry is security. We have had three burglaries since we moved here eight years ago."

As the owner of 80 acres of land, Laing, who works for estate agents Strutt & Parker, who are strongly associated with the country, is in no doubt that landowners should be more welcoming, not less. "If we create proper parking areas at the start of footpaths, there will be less reason for people to stray on to grazing land."

How often do you see one start on a narrow verge in a bramble hedge and with nowhere to park for half a mile? Then walkers roam illegally across fields until they pick up the route path. Worse still, they are likely to hock up gateways with their cars.

"My problem is not with ramblers but with motorcyclists. If a group of kids come along whistling and singing, that's great. What I do object to is when a motorbike, which shouldn't be there, spoils our privacy. When they race around on a Sunday



It's always nice to meet new people - as long as they behave responsibly and respect residents' right to a bit of privacy

John Voos

'Ramblers must understand that what is just grass to them is a crop to us'

bridle path. Walkers and riders are as much part of his landscape as the animals, and he has few complaints. "They almost always stop and say good morning, and ask what we are doing. They have a genuine interest in the countryside. In every respect, it is an enjoyable experience."

Controversy over the right to roam makes it easy to believe that landowner and public are locked in battle over the use of the countryside. Even though it is an issue affecting mainly large estates with open land,

afternoon without silencers, the noise is like holding a chain saw. They can be physically and verbally abusive. One took a swing at a guest last summer. By the time the police arrive, they've disappeared."

Nor is it just bikes. Drivers of four-wheel vehicles are equally tempted by the open land. This kind of scenario is why some buyers won't contemplate buying a place where the public have access. As they see it, the public has lost sight of the fact that these paths originally existed for a

few villagers to get to work or nip to the pub. Their fear is of numbers and confronting the badly behaved.

At the Exeter office of Knight Frank, Richard Addington is used to buyers from the south-east throwing up their hands in horror. "I try to explain that in Devon we have 3,500 miles of footpaths and, apart from the coastal paths, they are not used much. There isn't the same pressure on them as in the south-east. Local people are more relaxed about it."

Last summer he sold two farm-

houses on the coast, both with a couple of cottages and 25 acres. The one that was very private sold for more than £500,000, while the other with a footpath that led quite close to the house, sold under half a million.

"There was a difference of about 15 per cent. The footpath was definitely a large factor, because anything that close to the sea would normally get a good price."

It is not unknown to lose a sale altogether. In Knight Frank's Guildford office, Nigel Mitchell says that the

saleability of such properties decreases, even in areas such as Hazelmore. "It's a particular problem where old farm cottages have been converted into a house. One, sitting in the middle of 30 acres, had a footpath running past the sitting room window."

At the moment, he has a cottage for sale in three quarters of an acre with a private right of way across it. "If it was a public footpath, it would be far more of a problem."

Some owners enjoy the prospect of running into the public; some of

them are farmers. Injured cattle or sheep stuck on their backs have been rescued after walkers have discovered them en route. "They must understand that what is grass to them, is a crop to us," says one. "And stick to the footpaths."

Walking is the only activity allowed since the prosecution earlier this century of an anti-hunt demonstrator. He stood on the footpath waving his umbrella and was found guilty of doing something other than walking. You have been warned.

Can Carol Vorderman really help you sell your home?

As the TV schedules fill up with property programming, Ginetta Vedrickis looks at the makeover phenomenon

SOME VENDORS go to extreme lengths. Inviting Carol Vorderman to give your home a quick makeover might be going a little far but could it help you sell?

Changing Rooms famously uses staple guns, MDF and Handy Andy to transform suburban domesticity into, if Laurence Llewellyn-Bowen has a say, something more closely resembling a bordello. Its ITV rival, *Better Homes*, features Carol Vordermann overseeing sledgehammers and wrecking balls with the emphasis on serious structural change as two families compete to see who can add most value to their properties.

Cynics might assume the bordello look hinders sales but some estate agents are keen to try unconventional ways of achieving commissions. Paul Curtis of Roy Brooks' Dulwich branch appeared in CS's *House Doctor*, in which "real estate stylist" Ann Maurice advises vendors how to improve their properties' appearance.

'You've got to look at your house as others do, which is hard if you've lived there some time'

Paul Curtis nominated two properties on his books which had not sold and viewers saw prospective buyers give opinions before and after Ann's makeover. Did the programme attract buyers? "We didn't sell either of them," says Paul who still credits the improvements of one "appalling" house. "Basically it was heaped with underwear and what the cameras couldn't capture was the smell."

After Ann Maurice fearlessly advised the vendor to remove the clutter, including the surfboard of undergarments, the property looked (and must have smelt) fresher - so why didn't Paul sell it? "We had an instant buyer but the vendor got greedy. I sold through another agent for £10,000 more."

In contrast, Paul's other property was a beautiful roof-terrace flat which proved surprisingly difficult to sell. "It's a lovely flat but the programme couldn't change the fact that it's on a main road," says Paul who firmly believes that *House Doctor*, unlike programmes featuring structural changes, reminds vendors of the



Terrie Towell, star - or victim - of BBC's 'Changing Rooms'

Mykel Nicolaou

obvious advantages of ensuring that their assets always look their best. "It's not necessary to renovate but it's common sense to tidy up and it pays."

Daisy Goodwin, *House Doctor*'s editor, agrees - and takes credit for turning around the infamous "house with underpants". "No one in their right mind would have bought that house but we sold it." She believes that most properties "given the Ann treatment" sell quicker and for more. "You've got to look at your house as others see it, which is hard if you've lived there for some time. But you wouldn't turn up for an interview

wearing old jeans and trainers and it's the same when selling."

Comparing buying to interviewing, Daisy says that prospective buyers decide within 10 seconds and she calls Ann Maurice's advice brutal but effective. "On TV it's essential not to pull punches." How did recipients respond to brutal criticism? "Some of them were dumbstruck until they saw their homes re-done and then they were convinced."

Daisy believes that Ann's background as an American real-estate agent gives her the edge over her British counterparts. "Agents there

have a professional attitude and must pass exams. Most are mature women with a real sense of what people want. Here you get spotty 24-year-olds who just have to be able to drive VW Golfs. They are too worried about losing their commissions but I think sellers would prefer agents who say, 'Do this and you can make thirty grand more.'"

Daisy admits to a serious distaste for other people's belongings and her own three purchases have all been of empty properties. When selling she makes strenuous efforts to erase any trace of human life. "We put fresh flowers out and clear everything away so

it's like a hotel. Trouble is, it looks so good that we don't want to move." She previously worked on *Homefront*, another makeover programme, but admits that she wouldn't undergo one herself. "Not in a million years. You don't have much control and the stress of TV crews and builders in your home is a nightmare. You can get pushed into doing things you don't want to do." She views *House Doctor* differently. "All these houses weren't selling and we helped them do it."

Someone who agreed to a TV makeover is Terrie Towell who, with husband Brian, allowed the BBC *Changing Rooms* team to transform their bedroom while they, with stylist Linda Barker, remade their neighbour's son's room. Though it was originally the neighbour's idea to apply, Terrie enjoyed the experience but says it was easy to be "talked into things". While she calls her pre-makeover bedroom "disgusting" she liked the end results. "It was hard work but I loved everything they did."

On 10 February the nation (well a few million viewers) will be privy to the inside of Terrie's lavender bedroom and, yes, she does cry on screen but puts this down to exhaustion rather than elation. All will be revealed then but the prospect of being recognised in the street is not a worry. "I don't mind if they buy me a drink." She believes her TV makeover will not affect future sales in real terms but will definitely improve saleability. "I don't think it will add pounds on but it could be a good selling point."

Paul Curtis agrees that properties which have appeared on TV hold added attraction for buyers and, by drawing attention to an area, help push up local prices. This week's tabloid headline "*Changing Rooms* wrecked my marriage" told the story of Stewart Bush, whose relationship foundered following his wife's reaction to the "futuristic silver revamp", forcing him to sell his Sidcup house.

Mr Bush won't be interested but if you're not the shy retiring type Daisy Goodwin is seeking vendors with hard-to-sell properties for *House Doctor*'s spring series. Not everyone need apply. "We rejected one which had been on the market for six years. If you're next to the M4 there are some houses that will never sell."

House Doctor: 0171-436 6064; *Roy Brooks*: 0181-299 3021; *Changing Rooms*: Wed 8pm BBC1; *Better Homes*: Mon 8.30pm ITV

STEPPING STONES ONE WOMAN'S PROPERTY STORY



Jennie Burgen and children

SINCE 1976, stained-glass maker Jennie Burgen has bought three properties. She now lives in a cottage in Wimbledon.

In the late Sixties, Jennie, her husband and a kitten lived in a small bedsit in Putney. The building backed on to a main railway line. "It was so noisy that you had to stop all conversation when a train went by."

Sharing a "grotty" bathroom with three other tenants while eight months pregnant brought the inevitable realisation: "It was time to move on." When her mother-in-law heard about a three-bedroom, three-reception Victorian house for rent in Wimbledon, Jennie went to see it. "It was a dump, with a leaking roof in the back extension, dangerous Thirties wiring and rotting window frames."

Most people would have balked but not Jennie: "We were thrilled, to us it was a palace." Every six months the landlord "repaired" the leaking roof using "bitumen and bits of old carpet", but by 1976, "two babies, much work and a second relationship later", Jennie and her partner bought the house as sitting tenants for £10,000.

Jennie loved the house and its space but hankered after a country cottage although "the time was never right". By 1986, the relationship had ended and Jennie sold for £69,000. She bought a smaller place in

nearby Mottspur Park for £50,000. This house was also Victorian and over time Jennie carried out much work including restoring the kitchen and stained-glass door which prompted her to take an evening class in stained-glass making. This led to a career - Jennie restored most of this street's doors. But when her children left home the house seemed too large.

Four months ago, she saw a "lovely two-bedroom 1860s cottage" for sale in Merton Park. Jennie sold for £155,000 and bought for £165,000 although local agents Finch & Co. estimate "tip-top" cottages in this conservation area now go for about £190,000.

She may not have made it to the country hut, just 10 minutes from Wimbledon station, lives next to a field and a churchyard.

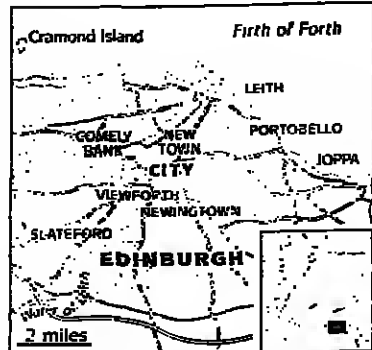
GINETTA VEDRICKAS

Those moves in brief... 1976 - bought three-bedroom Wimbledon house as sitting tenant for £10,000, sold for £69,000. 1986 - bought smaller house in Mottspur Park for £50,000 sold for £155,000. 1998 - bought cottage for £165,000, worth £190,000.

If you would like your moves to be featured write to: Nic Cicuttini, *Stepping Stones*, One Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL. £100 will be awarded for the best story.

HOT SPOT
EDINBURGH

Turning over a new Leith



The Scottish Parliament is coming. The Scottish Parliament is coming. Unfortunately, Edinburgh property conversations these days often end where they began: with anticipation of the new Parliament at Holyrood, in the city centre.

How much turbulence will it cause in Edinburgh property values? Some local estate agents expect limited movement, in keeping with a city of half a million people. Others anticipate soaring prices, while Colin Strang Steel, a partner at Knight Frank, believes that most of the effects that will happen already have: "I think prices will start to level off now. Most of the demand will soon be satisfied."

Colin Campbell is an army officer, and he has been watching the property market carefully. A single man who is currently flat-hunting, he is concentrating his efforts in central Edinburgh: "I'm looking in New Town, Stockbridge and Comely Bank, and prices are going through the roof. A few months ago, a flat on offer for £79,000 went for £105,000."

Mr Campbell contrasts Edinburgh night life with that of London, where evenings can begin in one area and often end up miles away in a completely different part of town. "Here, you walk out of your house, go to one section of town, and stay for the night. Living away from the centre would detract from that."



Leith, once the city's port, is being transformed into a London Docklands-style area

Sunday Mail

And soaring city-centre prices, he believes, are counter-balanced in that this area will be "more insulated against price falls in future."

Excitement regarding the new Parliament is obscuring the perception of many waterfront refurbishment schemes, that are putting previously unappealing or non-residential sections of town firmly on to the house-buyers' map. The new home of the

royal yacht Britannia, Leith, "was once Edinburgh's port and it had been run down," says solicitor George Clark, chairman of the Edinburgh Solicitors Property Centre (ESPC).

"This historic port now has developments similar to London's Docklands, such as bonded warehouses converted into lofts, and trendy restaurants, bars and nightlife."

Mr Clark notes that Leith has

already seen big price increases, which are propelling buyers further east along the harbour, to areas such as Portobello and Joppa. "Portobello was a Victorian holiday resort with good housing stock but no scope for Docklands-type development." The entire waterfront is slated for massive redevelopment in the future.

Closer to the city centre, "certain parts of Newington have Victorian vil-

las, but the sections with flats may attract buyers priced out of Marchmont, where two-bedroom flats sell for approximately £100,000," notes Mr Clark. "The same flat in Newington is only £70-£80,000, and further out prices in Slateford are even lower."

Mr Clark's take on Parliament? It may stimulate the rental rather than the buyer's market.

ROBERT LIEBMAN

THREE TO VIEW

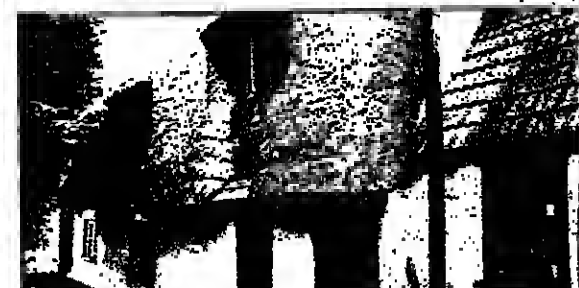
HERE FOR THE BEER



IT'S ONLY about a 100ft walk to The Star from this two-bedroom cottage in Mill Lane, Romsey, Hampshire, with another half a dozen pubs not much further on in the town centre. The front door of the brick-built terraced cottage leads directly into the kitchen which has modern lined oak units, built-in oven and hob and a Chinese slate floor. There's an 11ft sitting room with exposed brick wall, beams, an open fireplace and staircase leading to the first floor. Outside there is a landscaped garden with an octagonal decking area and pergola. Offers are invited from around £115,000. For details call Nicholas Zorab (01794 511911).



IT'S A brisk 10 minute walk from Toad House to the White Swan in North Walsham, 15 miles from Norwich: time to build up a real thirst for East Anglia's famed ales. The four-reception, four-bedroom detached house with roses around the windows was formerly two cottages, but was recently converted and renovated. It has a 13ft farmhouse-style kitchen, built-in oven and hob and a door leading to a sun room, a conservatory and a large breakfast room. There is a private rear garden with pond and fruit trees, a terrace and garden shed. Offers are invited from around £129,950. For details contact Francis Hornor Brown & Co (01603 767606).



THIS 17th-century cottage, tucked away down a pedestrian-only lane in Melbourn, Cambridgeshire, three miles from Royston, is hidden from the road and has no garage or parking space. But as it's only a minute's walk from The Black Horse at one end of the lane and The Dolphin at the other, who needs a car? In a village of lovely old cottages, number six Little Lane maintains the status quo. Grade II listed, it has a 22ft drawing room with beams and brick inglenook fireplace, a study with an internal stained-glass window and three bedrooms, all with sloping ceilings. Close to Meldreth railway station, the journey to King's Cross is about an hour. The guide price is £139,950, details from Bruce Munro (01799 522628) or Tuckers (01223 845240).

ROSALIND RUSSELL

THE LOW-DOWN

Transport: Edinburgh has an international airport with daily flights to more than 10 major UK and continental destinations. By train, journey times are 45 hours to London, 1.5 hours to Newcastle, and 45 minutes to Glasgow.

Lies and damned lies: The Edinburgh Solicitors Property

Centre (ESPC) compiles and distributes average prices and percentage changes for several inner-city areas as well as the suburbs. West Lothian, East Lothian, and Midlothian. City-centre prices increased 23 per cent between 1997 and 1998, and Marchmont and Bruntsfield jumped 18 per cent. Leading all

categories, however, are suburban post-1920 detached villas, which have risen by 26 per cent. The ESPC has been tracking prices for more than 25 years and has yet to see a drop, the average rising from £9,084 in 1973 to £80,000 in 1998.

New developments: When completed this summer, Bryant

Homes' Heriot Square in Roseburn will contain nearly 200 two- and three-bedroom flats (146 already sold), being built in six phases. The 19 on current release are selling for £110,000 to £148,000.

Waterfront Edinburgh: This is the title of a government private partnership to build nearly 4,000

residential units along the eight-mile waterfront. First for sprucing up are Granton and Muirhouse.

Council tax: Band A is £578, and Band H £1,734.

Estate Agents: ESPC 0131 624 8000; George Clark 0131 550 1001; Knight Frank 0131 225 8171.

TEL: 0171 293 2222

PROPERTY: RESIDENTIAL

FAX: 0171 293 2505

REGENT LETTING LTD
Tel: 0171 916 0313 Fax: 0171 916 1607

LANDLORDS SPECIAL RATES

8%

No Fee To Tenants
84B Camden Rd
London NW1 9EA

OSNEY CRESCENT, NW5
Large one bedroom flat in Camden, good size lounge, fitted kitchen. Available in March

PORT HILL, ROAD, N4
One double bedroom flat in Portobello Park, large, fitted kitchen. Available now.

BRUGES PLACE, NW1
2 double bedroom flat in Portobello Park, large, fitted kitchen. Available now.

SWAINS LANE, N6
Two bedroom flat in Portobello Park, large, fitted kitchen and washing machine. Available in Feb.

BERGHOFF MEWS, NW1
Landy two bedroom house, double lounge, large separate lounge, fully fitted kitchen with washing machine, available in Feb.

LUXBOURGH, W1
Two double bedroom flat, large lounge, fully fitted kitchen, close to transport, available now.

BOYNGS RD, N19
Three double bedroom flat, large separate lounge, fully fitted kitchen with washing machine, available now.

CLIVE, N19
3x two double bedroom beautiful luxury apartments in the city overlooking the Thames, fully equipped with all modern conveniences, modern new development. Secure off street parking with electric gates. AVAILABLE NOW. MUST BE SEEN!!

CLIVE, N19
Landy three bedroom flat in zone 1, fully fitted kitchen with washing machine, two reception rooms, 24 hour porter, can be for four people. Available.

ST AUGUSTINES RD, NW1
Beautiful eight bedroom house in a good location with very large lounge, fully fitted kitchen/diner, AVAILABLE NOW. MUST BE SEEN!!

France

Modern house in 2,100m² of garden bordering trout river AVRE in hamlet near DREUX. 2hrs from DIEPPE and 1hr from Paris. 3 bedrooms + 1 huge room. Mature garden, fruit trees, patio by the river, with around 150m of river bank. £65,000. Tel: 01895 232202

Italy

COMPREHENSIVE house hunting service for property purchasers in Umbria. From apartments to castles. All negotiations in English. For details Tel/Fax Casa Cicale 0030 075 514 0449

Sussex

RURAL CO-HOUSING PROJECT. East Sussex, 2 bed flat, shared use of 26 acres and community facilities. Commitment to co-housing philosophy vital. 01273 913622

SUSSEX NR. MICHURST
Secluded Country Cottage, 3 bed, £100,000. Tel 01730 821541

Wimbledon

STONE COTTAGE for complete renovation. Lovely views. Cash buyers. details 01891 774362

BUYING ABROAD?

The Spring overseas property exhibition:
The Cumberland Hotel
Marble Arch, London W1
Friday 12th, Saturday 13th, Sunday 14th February 1999
Friday 1200 - 1800 Sat/Sun 1030 - 1700

Over 50 top Agents and Developers from Spain and the Balearics, the Canaries, Gibraltar, Portugal, France, Italy, Greece, Cyprus, Crete, Florida and the Caribbean will be displaying their properties.

THE INTERNATIONAL PROPERTY SHOW
FREE Admission
Tel: 01420 520 777
www.tipsa.com

Colour Property appears every Sunday.
50% of Independent on Saturday readers are currently buying their own home.
To advertise call
The Property Team on
0171 293 2302
or 0171 293 2343
Source: NRS (Jan '97 - June '97)

MAJOR REGIONAL PROPERTY AUCTION

MAINLY BY ORDER OF THE MORTGAGEES
23rd February 1999 - The Swallow Hotel, Bexley Heath, Surrey at 1pm - 27 Lots

Kent, Essex, Greater London, Surrey, Hertfordshire, Devon, Powys, Berkshire, Hampshire, Swansea, Cardiff, East Sussex, Carmarthenshire, Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire, Derbyshire, Cornwall and Oxfordshire

FOR CATALOGUES PLEASE TELEPHONE 0839 772204

CALL to this number over 48p a min at all times (if a fixed fee rate may involve a long call please call the number below for further information)
Offices: FF Offices, 16/16 Grove Road South, Southwark PO2 3RD
FOR CATALOGUE ENQUIRIES
PLEASE TELEPHONE
0839 772204

General Accident Property Services

London Property

DomusNova

Clarity of design, innovation, lifestyle.
Our ethos is clear, we have a selection of interior designed properties for sale in West London

www.domusnova.com

0171 727 1717

West Country

CREWKERNE

For details of our traditionally built detached bungalows and houses, all with GCH, priced from £112,950 to £164,950

Please contact
Charles Bishop Ltd on
01460 73003

Sell your home for as little as £50 per advertisement

THE INDEPENDENT INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

Advertise your property through the Independent and Independent on Sunday's highly successful Property Gallery, a marketplace that is tried, tested and works.

The advertisement appears in the Saturday Your Money or the Sunday Business sections. Your property will appear in the format shown here, with 40 words of description complemented by a full colour photograph of your home.

The Cost

The more advertisements you book, the cheaper the cost per ad:-

1 x Advertisement costs £95
2 x Advertisements cost £130 (£65 each)
3 x Advertisements cost £150 (£50 each)

Fill in this coupon and send payment, a colour photograph and up to 40 words of copy to: The Property Team, Classified Advertising, 19th Floor, Independent Newspaper, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL

Deadline for receipt of copy/photo is at least 8 working days prior to publication. Offer open to private advertisers only, commercial advertising package available on request.

CRANBROOK

Detached family house, Grade II Listed, large kitchen, reception room, billiards room, 4 bed, 2 bath. Beautiful well maintained property of 1/2 acre. Well connected to road and rail. Expects local schools.

£250,000
Please Telephone (Daytime):
0171 293 2037

NAME.....

TELEPHONE (daytime).....

ADDRESS.....

I require ☐ ☐ ☐ (tick appropriate box) Advertisement(s) at a total cost of £.....

Please enclose a cheque for this amount made payable to 'Newspaper Publishing Plc' or fill in your Visa/Access/Amex/Diners Club details:

CREDIT CARD NO..... EXPIRY DATE.....

SIGNATURE.....

For advice or more information please call 'The Property Team' on 0171-293 2343 or 0171-293 2302